

# THE LIVING AGE.

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{ From Beginning.  
Vol. CCXXVI. }

## CONTENTS

I. The Intellectual Awakening of China. <i>By Robert K. Douglas</i> . . .	NINETEENTH CENTURY	137
II. A Literary Nihilist. <i>By Thomas Seccombe</i> . . . . .	CORNHILL MAGAZINE	141
III. The Heart of Darkness. VI. <i>By Joseph Conrad</i> . . . . .	BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE	153
IV. Cowper's Ouse. <i>By J. C. Tarrow</i> . . . . .	MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE	158
V. The North. <i>By E. S. P. H.</i> . . . . .	SPEAKER	167
VI. The Shame of William Danby. <i>By Frederick Langbridge</i> . . .	LEISURE HOUR	168
VII. Passion and Imagination in Poetry. <i>By H. C. Beeching</i> . . .	NATIONAL REVIEW	180
VIII. In Memoriam. Catharine Gladstone, June 14, 1900. . . . .		
<i>By Arthur C. Benson</i> . . . . .	SPECTATOR	188
IX. The Study of Plant Life. <i>By Thomas Cooke-Trench</i> . . . . .	LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE	189
X. The Sea Wrack. <i>By Moira O'Neill</i> . . . . .		195
XI. Miss Mary Kingsley. . . . .	SPECTATOR	196
BOOKS AND AUTHORS . . . . .		198

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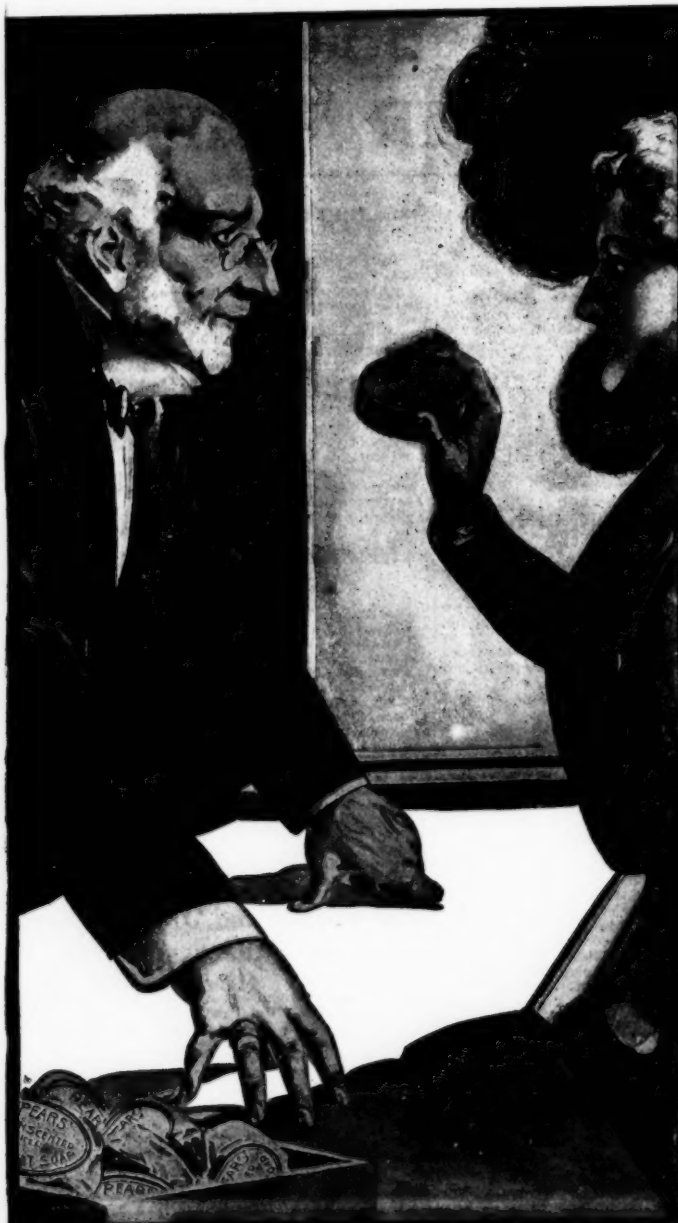
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## THE INTELLECTUAL AWAKENING OF CHINA.

The refusal of the Taotal of Shanghai to permit foreign steamers to trade between Shanghai and Chusan, and the attacks on the English surveying party at Weihaiwei, are two among many indications that the present rulers at Peking, having scotched the leaders and principal objects of the reform party, are now descending to details, and to the infliction of pin-pricks on all outer barbarians who are presumably aiders and abettors of the unfortunate K'ang Yu-wei and his followers. In pursuance of these objects they are evincing a fixed determination to put beyond the pale everything that calls itself foreign, and more especially every means of advancement towards enlightenment which may have gained the advocacy of the unfortunate K'ang. This policy is not a wise one. It reflects the feminine instinct of revenge, and displays a degree of ignorance of the forces they are combating which can only be explained by the light of their preceding blunders in the same direction. For the moment we may set aside the foreign difficulties of the Empire. They are such as those who run may read, and will, we may hope, be set right by the exercise of firmness and discretion. The opponents which the Empress and her Ministers are arraying against themselves within

the Empire are, however, not so easily observable. At present the strength of those who cherish the teaching of K'ang is to sit still, and the punishments which overtook the signatories to the protest against the deposition of the Emperor are object lessons which are not likely to be forgotten by them. But, though wrapped in an enforced silence they are there, and are every day gaining recruits and improving their stock of knowledge.

Physicians recognize that in some forms of disease the cessation of pain is one of the most hopeless symptoms, and an analogous state of affairs exists at the present moment in China, where the action of the Government is so entirely divorced from the sentiment of the country that, oblivious of the unrest in their midst, the rulers cry Peace, Peace, while war and revolution are threatening. With blind obstinacy the Manchu rulers of the Empire are proving themselves to be as much opposed to reason and as much wedded to their fossilized system of government as they have ever been, while their immediate actions have shown that the only reply they were willing to vouchsafe to reformers is the old-world formula of the executioner's sword.

But this weapon, though formidable enough when wielded with the wide

sweep common in Eastern countries, can, after all, only terrorize a comparative few. The leaders are sent to the execution ground, as was lately the case with the six reformers at Peking, or are compelled to fly the country like K'ang Yu-wei and Sun Yatsen, but the seed sown remains in the land, and having fallen on a congenial soil is probably destined to bring forth fruit at no very distant date. The rulers and the ruled are thus pulling in two different directions. The authorities at Peking, uninfluenced by the opinions of the outer world, and supremely ignorant of everything beyond their immediate ken, pursue their traditional course, and attempt to force on a now inquiring and expanding nation a Procrustean system of government which duly suited the people in days gone by, but which is rapidly becoming impossible now that light is beginning to shine in the provinces and knowledge to spread. Under the teachings of K'ang Yu-wei and the influence of foreign literature it is beginning to dawn on the people that wisdom is not limited to the writings of Confucius and his followers; that there are other and better methods of advancement in knowledge and in material prosperity than are dreamt of in his philosophy; and that if the enemy is to be kept from the gates, it is absolutely necessary that they should adopt other warlike methods than those which satisfied all requirements when the world was young.

One potent agency in bringing about this change in the popular mind has been the "Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge among the Chinese," which, by circulating translations of European works on religion, science and general subjects, has, during the twelve or thirteen years of its existence, done a great and increasingly great work.

The primary object with which the

Society was established was to gain by some means or other the ear of the intellectual classes. The founders felt that in a country such as China the motive power for the effectual working of a change should come from above and not from below, and that so long as the mandarins and *literati* were banded together in a league of ignorance, reforms would be impossible, except by the drastic method of revolution. Their first efforts were directed, therefore, to supplying the educated classes with a literature which should enlighten their understandings, and show them a more perfect way of knowledge than their native books were able to point out. This was a wise step. It will be remembered that the Jesuit missionaries of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries established themselves in the good graces of the Government and gained a wide influence at Peking by publishing translations of religious and scientific works in the pure literary style which Chinese scholars affect, and which is the only guise under which they are willing to acquaint themselves with new facts. Following this example the Society set to work, and, according to the Eleventh Report it has already issued rather more than 120 works on religious, scientific and historical subjects. The result has been a triumphant success. The books have circulated far and wide through the provinces and have met with a ready sale. That they would have gained an audience in any circumstances there cannot be any doubt, but unquestionably events have fought in their favor. The war with Japan produced a deep and widespread impression. The ruin of the native armies and the destruction of their fleets brought home to the people for the first time the fact that they were behind the age; and they eagerly turned for instruction towards the same sources which had so successfully

armed Japan in the day of battle. A strong impetus was thus given to the study of Western learning, and the extent of this impetus can best be gauged by a comparison of the proceeds of the sales of the Society's books in the two years 1893, before the war, and 1898, after it. In the first period 817 dollars' worth were sold, while in the second period the sum of 18,457 dollars was realized. The books thus disposed of treat all branches of Western learning, such, for example, as geography, history, sciences and travel, besides the Bible. As an example of the way in which those of their books which met the public requirement were caught up, it may be mentioned that when a popular edition of Mackenzie's *Nineteenth Century* was brought out, 4,000 copies out of an edition of 5,000 were sold within a fortnight. So unprecedented was such a rapid sale, and so continuous was the demand for this and other works that the printing trade at Shanghai was completely nonplussed. The older houses could not meet the demand on their resources, and new printing establishments sprang up on all sides. The price of paper went up by leaps and bounds, and the binders were quite unable to cope with the work thus suddenly demanded of them.

In China the law of copyright is practically unknown, and the temptation, therefore, to reprint works which have justified their appearance by their popularity is often too much for the somewhat weak morality of Chinese publishers. These literary pirates, like their congeners further West, are constantly on the watch for any works which are likely to repay the questionable enterprise of reprinting, and the unwonted success of the Society's publications instantly marked them down as fitting and profitable spoil. A number of these books have been reprinted in the province of Ssu-ch'uan, and in most provinces the process is in full

swing. However disturbing this may be to the Society's assets, it is a marked acknowledgment of the success of the works they publish, and they may find some satisfaction in placing against their diminished profits the consciousness that the objects of the Society are being served.

Not content with the ordinary system of publication, the Society seeks to circulate books and pamphlets among the students at each of the 200 centres of examination. Success has crowned their efforts in this direction also. It is notorious that a great amount of literature, not always of the most elevating character, is disseminated in this way, the students too often carrying back to their villages the current literature of the restaurants and singing rooms. If the Society can succeed in substituting their publications for the trashy, and worse than trashy, books which represent to the bucolic Chang the fascinating glitter of the city, they will do a great work.

But above and beyond the efforts of this Society the people are trying to work out their own salvation, and are seeking for light with an ardor which would have been deemed impossible before the Japanese war. Not only are they publishing on their own account translations of foreign works which they deem likely to be useful, but they are multiplying native newspapers at such a rate that if there existed a Chinese Imperial Library, that establishment would before long be reduced to the present overcrowded condition of the British Museum. In 1895 only nineteen native newspapers enlightened the dark minds of the people. In 1898 this number was quadrupled, and the stream has since been pouring out with increased volume and without a check until the Dowager Empress threw cold water in a strongly worded edict on all such enterprises. The same chilling influence has lately been used for the

suppression of the schools and colleges which were springing into life, and the promoters of these establishments have in many cases had to yield. But though for the time being some of the outward symptoms of the agitation may be checked, the movement is going steadily on. The greed with which Western literature is being devoured is all the more remarkable since only 10 per cent. of the entire population are able to read, and it is by this small proportion of the people that the numerous editions of the imported books are devoured. On all sides evidences of the spread of knowledge are observable, and travelers have of late been amazed to find officials in distant provinces who can talk glibly on new scientific discoveries, and who are intimately acquainted with the constitutional histories of Western nations. Matters must have gone far when even so staunch an upholder of the doctrine of China for the Chinese as the Viceroy Chang Chih-t'ung himself advocates the cause of Western learning. In a recent State paper he recommends the addition of "mathematics, map-drawing and the elements of science" to the curriculum of the native schools, and "a wide grasp of history, the science of government and the study of foreign languages" to that of the colleges. The means by which he proposes to provide buildings for those educational establishments have a touch of Oriental absolutism about them which is, at least, thorough. "If the worst comes to the worst," he says, "seize the Buddhist and Taoist monasteries. China possesses several myriads of them; all have lands attached to them, which have been given for charitable purposes, and if these were secured we should have enough for all our needs."

Throughout the Empire numberless native schools are doing good work in

*The Nineteenth Century.*

spite of the opposition of the Court; and there is, speaking generally, a seething mass of intellectual discontent which will have to be reckoned with. It is as futile to attempt to crush such a movement by the issuing of edicts and the persecution of individuals as it would be to try to check the course of the Yellow River by a barrier of bulrushes, and the government is making a fatal mistake in endeavoring to trample on the agitation instead of guiding it.

For the first time in the history of the people the educated classes have become aware of their ignorance, and of their consequent impotence as a nation, and are holding out their hands for help. From their government they asked for bread, and they were given a stone, and it now only remains for them to work out their own enlightenment with such help as they can get from the outside. It is a noticeable fact that the Chinese colonists in California, the Straits Settlements and elsewhere, are forming organizations and collecting money for the education of their stay-at-home countrymen in Western knowledge, while the foreign Society, which has already been mentioned, and other independent agencies are doing their utmost to foster the praiseworthy efforts of native workers. Like all large bodies, the Chinese people are slow in moving, but the time will inevitably come when there will be an impetus from within which will compel them to push forward, and when that psychological movement arrives the Dowager Empress's government will have either to bend or to break before the national will; unless, indeed, it shall have been already dismissed by the action of the revolutionary forces which are always in being within the Chinese borders.

*Robert K. Douglas.*

## A LITERARY NIHILIST.

For that prevalent epidemic, decrepitude of faith, France has shown herself prolific in physicians and prescriptions. If optimism breaks down, it seems but fair to the versatile intellect of Gaul to give pessimism a chance; if positivism fails, why not try negativism or nihilism? Not the political doctrine, *bien entendu*. There is no reason whatever why we should restrict the term "nihilism" to a political creed of which we know extremely little, and which we can with difficulty distinguish from anarchism. It seems, on the other hand, remarkably well suited to a form of literary scepticism which submits the most important operations of life to contemptuous analysis, and which laughs at the assumed dignity of an animal swayed by the ridiculous impulses, the grotesque beliefs and the hopeless desires of mankind, while assuring the individuals of the species that the worst possible mistake they can make is to take themselves seriously.

Your ordinary propagandist, of positivist tendencies, intent upon making converts, is wont to subordinate literary to practical effect; but a vehement nihilist is a contradiction in terms. The futility of human effort is not a theme for the ponderous strokes of the polemical craftsman, but for the delicate handling of the true literary artist; and seldom has a creed of any kind found an expositor of such exquisite literary art as the new nihilism has found in M. Anatole France.

Born in the same year with Munkacsy, in that 1844 in which King Louis Philippe returned the visit of Queen Victoria to the Château d'Eu, M. France was the son of a bookseller on the Quai Malaquais. He speaks with an urbanity that would have been cred-

itable to Dr. Johnson of the "incomparable paysage" of the quails of Paris, and truly, as lapidary landscapes go, it would be hard to beat that which greets the eye of the pilgrim as he crosses the historic river by the Pont des Arts that Balzac loved. "Born in a library," like Benjamin Disraeli, Anatole France exhibits even more unequivocal traces of his origin in every fragment that he has penned. The driest book upon the top shelf of a chapter library has a secret to impart to him; like Washington Irving, he understands the little language of ancient yellow quartos, and can translate their confidences into a tongue intelligible to the vulgar. Many will share his earliest bibliographical recollection, that of an early eighteenth-century Bible, with the Amsterdam landscapes of a Dutch artist, and God in a white beard. "How sincerely I believed in him—although, between ourselves, I considered Him inclined to be whimsical, violent and wrathful; but I did not ask Him to render an account of His actions. I was accustomed to see great personages behaving in an incomprehensible manner." Yet, he adds, "how delightful to believe the secret of the universe in an old book, and to find in one's Noah's Ark a great proof of the truth of the Scriptures."

The horizon of his childhood was strictly limited to two bends of the Seine valley and the obscure old shops between St. Sulpice and the Institut. But in the early days of the Second Empire he went to the Collège Stanislas, where he "had the best of masters and was the worst of scholars." The college was "very different then"—from most schools, past or present. How is it that men of genius invariably go to schools in which every recognized

scholastic principle appears to be openly defied?

The scholars in M. France's time were few, and the discipline to match. We were given a little liberty and took more, and life was very tolerable. "The Abbé Lalanne, our master, was venerable, yet the smiles that he provoked were not few. He was a poet who took much more pleasure in versification than Lamartine, but who met with less success." Here it was, however, that the youth, whose French style "lacked distinction," felt the "blossoming newness of things" and was inundated by the divine Homer. "At the first lesson I saw Thetis rising like a white cloud above the waves." The Hellenic charm operated sensibly upon his artistic soul. He cultivated the society of Leconte de Lisle and the "impassibilité olympienne" of the Parnassiens of 1865. But he scarcely crossed the threshold of the Parnasse, he never became the disciple of a school, and his own brief excursions into poetry, such as the "Noces Corinthiennes," owe their direction more to Alfred de Vigny than to Leconte de Lisle, and much more to André Chénier than to either. Leaving college, he sauntered with an amount of conscience which Stevenson himself could not but have approved. "I led a solitary and contemplative life, and as I was studying nothing. I learned much." As a child he had studied art in its noblest manifestation, as the handmaid of religion. For the philosophy of life, he now turned to the best available, that of the eighteenth century, of Montesquieu, Voltaire and Hume. Nor was M. France's development to lack a scientific phase. The Jardin des Plantes, formerly the symbol of Eden, became his biological museum. He burrowed in Darwin, and glided over the whole surface of Taine. "I should have been provoked to anger then, had I been told that the system of Taine, like any other, was a mere piece

of furniture. It was a glorious time, that in which we lacked common sense."

It must not be supposed that he neglected what we may call the three R's of every Frenchman of sensibility: Racine, Rousseau and Renan. In his minute knowledge of religious archæology, M. France is pre-eminently *après* Renan. So he is in his love of hagiology. A good nihilist loves the communion of saints. In order to make a saint, says M. France, in what may be a partial explanation, a foundation of thumping big sins would seem to be essential.

As in physiognomy (you may, if you have an exuberant fancy, trace a remote likeness to the imperial effigy on the French coins anterior to 1870) so in mental constitution, M. France is typically French. Of his many critics (and they are all enthusiasts), one has written, "Il est l'extrême fleur du génie latin." Among English writers it is difficult to name any whom he resembles with any degree of distinctness. Generically speaking, as a master of irony and a humorist of Cervantic descent, he has not a little in common with Fielding and with Disraeli; but in subtlety he suggests a much closer resemblance to Mr. Meredith, while in sentiment he is a good deal nearer than either to Dickens. As a practitioner of fiction he takes, perhaps, a greater license than any of the masters named, for he is less a novelist than a thinker in novelistic form. As regards style it is still more difficult for us to match him; but by combining some of the features of Chesterfield, of Sterne and of Matthew Arnold, we may get some idea of the pellucid clearness, the happy glint of fancy and the felicity in phrase that go to make up a style *absolutely free from any straining after effect*. With all great artists it is the same, their talent seems to ignore labor. Yet the best writers have worked their hardest



(like Cowper) to attain this sovereign appearance of ease. Few have, perhaps, got nearer perfection in the attempt than the author of "Colomba" (the "Premier Prose" of Victor Hugo's anagram), between whom and the writer of "Pierre Nozière" we should like well enough, if we dared, to suggest a comparison. For the wonderful "relief" and "atmosphere" that M. France is able to concentrate upon a small surface, a good deal is due, no doubt, to the long vigils of Flaubert and Maupassant. A distinctive feature of the style as thus elaborated is the combination of color with concision. One marvels at the skill with which the author records the impression received not so much (as it appears) by himself, as by his characters. M. France seldom describes a scene impersonally. What he excels in, is in giving his reader the reflection of external circumstance upon the minds of his actors—the landscape, or other setting, being reflected or suggested, as it were, by a few exquisite touches, while the reader escapes the least infliction of word painting or topographical explanation.

The fact is that the very complexity and richness of M. France's style multiplies the points of comparison, and it would be possible to name many other authors, both stylists and philosophers, whose influence is clearly discernible in his writings. Of his debt to Renan he makes no secret, and without "Candide" it may be possible to doubt if "Jérôme Colgnard" could have assumed its present form. One fact, at least, is abundantly clear, that M. France has always been a diligent inquirer—not into the geography of the known merely, but also into the selenography of the unknown—and it has certainly not been from want of due investigation that he has developed into the type of man so comprehensively anathematized by Thomas Edwards,

some two hundred years before our nihilist was born, "as a very subtle man, a seeker, a questionist, a sceptick and, I fear me, an atheist."

But though he is an excellent scholar and has much of the spirit of the antiquary, M. France is never a pedant or a copyist, for he knows how to subordinate the labors of research to the creation of an original literary impression, and he has gone as near as any one to solving the problem of making the scholar work for the artist.

As a writer he has two other sufficiently rare characteristics. It is generally admitted that there are few minds which have accomplished much that to observant eyes at one time have not promised more. One may go a good deal further and say that the number of writers who have sustained their early promise—or, still more, made any steady progress in literary excellence—is exceedingly small. Of this chosen few Anatole France is unquestionably one. His work has not only matured, but has ripened uniformly while preserving the best qualities of his youth. In the second place, he is seldom imitative, and is never content to imitate himself. In his solitary novel of regulation pattern, "Le Lys Rouge," M. France has shown that upon their own ground he might prove a very formidable rival of such writers as Marcel Prévost and Paul Hervieu. But he has shown a wise discretion in refusing to harp upon the study of a little corner of Parisian life and the curious manner in which the art of love is practiced there. Even Maupassant's work grew infected with this monotonous topic, to deal with which and at the same time avoid repetition would hardly seem possible.

The writer with whom Anatole France has the most striking affinity is not one of those that we have named, and not Heine, but Lucian, that strange contemporary of Marcus Aurelius,

whose playful satire has still so much that is of modern application about it. In his fondness for the dialogue form, in his calm abstention from needless explanations, in his admirable blending of comedy and philosophy, and in the delightful waywardness of his narrative, by which the tedious portions of the tale proposed seem, as if by magic, evaded, M. France is continually suggestive of Lucian; and in his "*Histoire Contemporaine*" he has erected for himself a much better claim to the title of "*Lucian Redivivus*" than even Raspe can be said to have done by his immortal fantasia in the key of the "*Vera Historia*" (to wit, "*Baron Munchausen*"). As regards the characters in the dialogue, again, we have the same clearness of intention and the same perfect appropriateness between the personages and the parts they have to sustain in the conversation. There is no imitation, of course, but there is a remarkable affinity and a common attainment of that most difficult literary aim—the gift of making us think without being a bore.

It is significant that M. France should have christened the protagonist of his great satire "*Lucien*" (M. Lucien Bergeret), and it recalls the fact that in his first work of prose fiction "*Jocaste*," the story of a woman's remorse, leading to her suicide by hanging herself, he could not resist the pleasure of applying to his heroine the name of the Theban *Jocasta*, the most celebrated of all "*pendues*." Before the production of "*Jocaste*" in 1879, M. France had subordinated his imagination rather strictly to the pursuit of erudition. The taste is sufficiently rare among men of high imaginative endowment to excite some amount of surprise. Not many imaginative writers have served a literal apprenticeship in a library (M. France was attached to the library of the Senate in 1876) and devoted their leisure to the editing of

the great writers of past time. But the real complexity of Anatole France's genius was first revealed by his successful story of 1881 (he was now thirty-seven), "*Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard*." Irony and pathos, learning and fancy, love of the past and insight into the present were promptly recognized to form in the new novelist a combination of faculties such as are very rarely seen in conjunction.

The fable is slight, one might even say conventional. In English fiction, at any rate, the antiquary and scholar has been depicted more than once with a fund of sympathy or of knowledge, as the case may be, that leaves little to be desired. Dr. Casaubon may be deemed to act as a counterpoise to the delightful figure of Monkbars, while, between the two, the portwine-loving Dr. Middleton symbolizes a type of scholar which, in a countryman of the convivial Porson, it would be unbecoming to ignore. Yet the portrait of M. Sylvestre Bonnard, of the *Qual Malaquais*, member of the Institut, is perfectly original and perfectly new, for it has nothing in common with any of these. The delicate intuition which has gone to make up M. France's intimate portrayal of the mind of an old recluse can only be described as one which Nathaniel Hawthorne himself might have envied. The contrast between the solemn pedantry of this modern Dugdale, the self-critical wisdom of his soliloquies and the burden of pathetic lament that forms an undertone to his reverie—the need of a being to love, of a fresh young face to reflect and concentrate the beauty that he felt around him each recurring springtide—this supplies the light and shade of a picture full of delicacy and charm. The fondness of the complex mind for that which is simple and primitive is strongly asserted in Bonnard. He succeeds at length in adopting the daughter of the woman he had loved years

ago, and the fearful joys of manuscript hunting and archaeological discovery are completely swallowed up by the prospect of becoming an adoptive grandfather. Jeanne is to be married to a rather promising young student of the Ecole des Chartes. "Her dowry," murmurs Sylvestre, "there it is, in front of me! It is my library. Henri and Jeanne have not the faintest suspicion of my plan; and the fact is, I am commonly believed to be much richer than I am. I have the face of an old miser. It is certainly a lying face; but its untruthfulness has often won for me a great deal of consideration. There is nobody in this world respected so much as a stingy rich man." He keeps to his stern resolve to sell his library, but he has not the heart to sell quite all of it. He determines to respite just a few of his folios, and the number of the reprieved shows a tendency to grow rapidly and mysteriously. The perpetration of this "crime" affords the material for a characteristic vignette. "Each time I come across a volume that has ever afflicted me with false dates, omissions, lies and other plagues of the archaeologist, I say to it with bitter joy: Go, imposter, traitor and false witness—*vade retro*." The distinction about the portrait of Bonnard lies in the fact that it is a portrait from within, it depletes the inner working of the scholar's mind; the reader is initiated into what are the genuine preoccupations of a student's life, nor are the limitations and the doubts, by which such a man is beset, concealed from view. In this case, however, the narrow though refined egotism of the scholar, absorbed in his own special study, is tempered by his recognition of the relative futility of all scholarship, and by the deeper and more pathetic sentiment of the fragility of all human destiny.

The inclination of the author to irony is qualified by a feeling of profound

compassion for human wretchedness. Against the sceptic's tendency to coldness and dryness, which seemed to be gaining so terribly upon Flaubert's work in his later years, M. France is happily preserved by a delicate imagination and a very profound sensibility. Scepticism has never gained over his heart. He enjoys feeling even more than apprehending. "Truths discovered by the intelligence remain sterile. The heart alone is capable of fertilizing its dreams." So he upholds sentiment against reflection, and he dwells with a constant delight upon the vanity of intelligence, the inutility of science, the incurable conceit of human reason. Ignorance, he says, is a necessary condition, not merely of happiness, but of existence. It is one of our delusions to suppose that scientific truth differs essentially from vulgar error; is it not, indeed, a complete mistake to endeavor to learn so much, when we shall never really know anything?

Upon the whole, therefore, it is merely the pleasing side of the life of a savant, at peace with the world, that M. France develops for us here. Bonnard is a *célibataire*, as abstracted as Adrian Sixte, as benevolent and tender at heart as "L'ami Fritz!" and if he is not quite so plastic in the hands of his *gouvernantes* as either Cousin Pons or the Abbé Birotteau, there is a geniality about his domestic relations not unworthy of my Uncle Toby. In him, however, the gentleness of "my uncle" is combined with the scholarly aptitudes and the ironic humors of that wise youth, Adrian, in "Richard Feverel." The best of men are famous for making confidants of their domestic pets, but few of the latter have been apostrophised with such exquisite literary discrimination as M. Bonnard's cat, Hamilcar. "Hamilcar, somnolent prince of the city of books, nocturnal guardian of my library—uniting in your person the formidable appearance of a

Tartar warrior with the drooping graces of an Eastern beauty. Here, sleep, in a library protected by your military virtues, sleep, my Hamilcar, with the luxury of a sultana. Sleep, heroic and voluptuous Hamilcar, and wait for the hour when the mice will dance in the moonlight before the 'Acta Sanctorum' of the learned Bollandists."

The antiquary was not insensible to the rebuff implied to learning by the fact that Hamilcar was more impressed by the lightest word of the housekeeper than by all his honeyed compliments. The knowledge made him inclined to be apologetic. In his excitement one day at the discovery of a manuscript, he knocked a volume of the ponderous Moréri over noisily with his elbow. "Hamilcar, who was washing himself, suddenly stopped and looked angrily at me. Was this the tumultuous existence he must expect under my roof? 'My poor, dear comrade,' I made answer, 'I am the victim of a violent passion,' and he proceeded to expatiate at considerable length to his cat upon the theory of the passions.

The ordinary lack of sympathy between successive generations of experts in matters of erudition is illustrated in Bonnard with a rare power of insight into such topics, but upon the whole, as will already have appeared, it is the favorable side of the scholarly life that is turned to us almost exclusively in this delightful book; the reader maintains a steadily optimistic frame of mind, and with difficulty (if at all) restrains a sentimental tear when Bonnard finds the long-desired manuscript or laments the premature death of his little godson.

M. France has retained a predilection for the type of the antiquary and the scholar, but since he wrote "*Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard*" he has discovered a very different kind of model, and he has mixed his colors upon a very different plan. In "*Le Lys*

Rouge" we are afforded a glimpse of the furious hatreds and the hurricanes of jealousy that subsist but too often in the relations between scholars of a world-wide celebrity. Schmoll, the great latinist, and "after Mommsen the first epigraphist in the world," has reproached his colleague at the Institut, M. Marmet, the great Etruscan scholar, with combining a suspicious fluency in Etruscan with a dangerous ignorance of Latin. Mounting the stairway at the Institut one day, in company with Renan and Oppert, Schmoll met Marmet and offered him his hand. Marmet ignored the proffered courtesy, and said, "I don't know you." "What!" retorted Schmoll, "do you take me for a Latin inscription?"

The bigoted self-absorption of the typical specialist is depicted with an exquisite raillery, and with a seeming extravagance that is yet very little removed from the perfect truth in the highly condensed portrait of M. Pigeonneau. "I have consecrated my entire life, as is well known, to the study of Egyptian archaeology, nor have my labors been sterile. I can say without self-flattery, that my '*Memoir upon the handle of an Egyptian mirror in the Louvre Museum*' may still be consulted with advantage, though it was one of my earliest productions. . . . Encouraged by the flattering reception accorded to my studies by colleagues at the Institut, I was tempted for a moment to embark upon a work of a very much wider scope—no less than a broad survey of the weights and measures in use at Alexandria under the reign of Ptolemy Auletes (80-52 B.C.). But I recognized very soon that a subject so general and so vast is not in any way adapted for treatment by a genuine man of science, and that serious scholarship could undertake it only at the risk of finding itself compromised amid all kinds of adventures. I felt that in considering several subjects at one and

the same time I was abandoning the fundamental principle of an archæologist. If to-day I confess my error, if I avow the inconceivable enthusiasm which launched me upon a project so extravagant, I do it in the interest of the young student, who will learn from my example to subdue his imagination. It is likely to be his most cruel enemy; for the scholar who has not succeeded in stifling the imagination within him is forever lost to science. I shudder still when I think of the chasms over which I was dangled in my adventurous spirit in this (happily) transitory ardor for general ideas. I was within an ace of what is called History! What an abyss! I was upon the point of falling into Art. For History is really no more, or, at best, only a specious and false science. Is it not a matter of common knowledge to-day, that the historian has preceded the archæologist, just as the astrologer has preceded the astronomer, the alchemist the chemist—nay, as the ape has preceded the man? But, thank heaven! I got off with a fright."

Another stage in the evolution of the erudite mind as conceived by Anatole France is marked by the character of M. Jérôme Coignard, a theological student of the greatest punctilio in regard to all matters of ritualistic tradition and doctrinal accuracy, but a thoroughgoing sensualist and a libertine, not only in action, but also in his whole philosophy of life. For an example of his ethical doctrine, as applied to the subject of feminine pride, we may refer the reader to the story of St. Mary the Egyptian, as interpreted by Coignard to his scholar, Jacques Tournebroke, in "*La Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque*." A scarcely less fascinating example of the sophistries of this silver-tongued old scoundrel may be found in his unflattering portrait of the father of his Church. The example of Boswell will help us to

understand the subtle pleasure that certain minds derive from detecting their own foibles in the character of a great "exemplar vite morumque." We must never for a moment, he insists, regret that disgraceful denial of St. Peter's. Think of the prophecies that had to be fulfilled. "Et si ce Pierre ou Céphas n'avait pas fait, cette nuit-là, la dernière des infamies, il ne serait pas aujourd'hui le plus grand saint du paradis et la pierre angulaire de notre sainte Eglise, pour la confusion des honnêtes gens selon le monde qui voient les clefs de leur félicité éternelle tenues par un lâche coquin. O salutaire exemple qui, tirant l'homme hors des fallacieuses inspirations de l'honneur humain, le conduit dans les voies du salut! O savante économie de la religion! O sagesse divine, qui exalte les humbles et les misérables pour abaisser les superbes! O Merveille! O Mystère! A la honte éternelle des pharisiens et des gens de justice, un grossier marinier du lac de Tibériade, devenu par sa lâcheté épaisse la risée des filles de cuisine qui se chauffaient avec lui dans la cour du grand prêtre, un rustre et un couard qui renonça son maître et sa foi devant des maritornes bien moins jolies, sans doute, que la femme de chambre de madame la baillive de Séz, porte au front la triple couronne, au doigt l'anneau pontifical, est établi au-dessus des princes-évêques, des rois, et de l'empereur, est investi du droit de lier et de délier; le plus respectable homme, la plus honnête dame n'entrèrent au ciel que s'il leur en donne l'accès."

Full of these racy, semi-blasphemous tirades, we have in Coignard a rich type of the clerical mendicant of a former age, in whom familiarity with theological mysteries had bred a well-nigh atheistical contempt for sacred subjects and inspired texts.

Peace upon earth, it is Coignard's conclusion, can only be attained by mutual contempt between man and



man. "If men only despised themselves and each other sincerely, they would no longer do evil, and would live together in an amiable tranquillity. All the evils of polite society are derived from the fact that the citizens thereof think too highly of themselves, raising honor, like a monster, upon an altar of misery, both mental and corporeal. Of all the things that I detest, I hate worst this spirit which renders men proud and cruel, this pride which requires them to honor themselves and to honor their neighbors. As if any one of the race of Adam could be worthy of honor! What a detestable idolatry! No, no! To assure to human beings an existence which may have something pleasant about it, it is absolutely necessary to recall them to their native humility."

But it is not until we come to Anatole France's later work, entitled "*Histoire Contemporaine*" (the series of three volumes, appearing 1897-9, entitled respectively "*L'Orme du Mall*," "*Le Mannequin d'Osier*" and "*L'Anneau d'Améthyste*"), that we feel the full force of his pessimistic philosophy. The protagonist, M. Lucien Bergeret, is by far the most carefully finished portrait in the gallery of scholars from which we have already selected some examples. In him the playful irony of Bonnard is almost wholly replaced by a cynicism that is full of a profound bitterness. He is Latin professor and "*maître de conférences*" to the faculty of letters in a city of northern France; and he takes the part of a generally dispassionate and always very satirical observer of the byplay of scholastic life, and of the numerous clerical and social intrigues which make up the life of an important provincial town, with its archbishop, its prefect and its general of division. The portraits of these worthies and of other local celebrities are all most carefully drawn. There is Charlot, the cardinal arch-

bishop, an elderly man of an extreme  *finesse* and an unctuously affectionate manner, but perfectly insincere and indifferent to everything but his own dignity and freedom of action; and Worms-Clavellin, the prefect, a coarse man, who "listened with his mouth" and whose face betrayed a mind wholly impervious to moral delicacy. At the country house which he honors with his presence he is brutally anticlerical and cynically vulgar in his familiarities with the fair but frail Mme. de Gromance. His wife, like himself, has much of the Teuton and the Semite in her composition, but she sends her daughter to a convent school, and is a connoisseur of church ornaments and embroidery. As her agent in procuring these rarities she employs the astute Abbé Guitrel, an aboriginal of purest French blood, from whom she hopes to derive the benefits of a pumice-stone "to remove the stains of Germany and of Asia." Guitrel is ultimately adopted as her candidate for a vacant bishopric in opposition to Bergeret's friend, Lantaigne, the great preacher of St. Exupère, and the only dialectician and man of general ideas in the place that he cares to measure his mind against.

Then there is General Cartier de Chalmot, with an intelligence excessively respectful of symbols, and a voice that betrays, at the same moment, the timidity of the man and the infallibility of the chief; and M. Terremondre, president of the local archaeological and agricultural societies, who got up the local statue to Joan of Arc and designs the costumes for the historical cavalcades. He is a strong anti-Semite in the country among the game preservers, but his principles are insensibly relaxed at Paris, especially during the financial dinner-party season. Among the minor characters are Fornerol, the skilful but unimaginative doctor; M. le Premier Président Cassignol, a perfect picture of the old man



hardened and withered, with his interests exclusively in the past; Paillot the discreet bookseller, who cultivates the reputation of a learned and academic hospitality.

With none of these personages has Bergeret much sympathy, though we are continually startled by the penetration with which he divines their secret motives and lays bare their ideas in all their native crudity. Nor has he much more fellow-feeling for any of his colleagues. In the small successes and triumphs of the pedagogic profession he can scarcely affect to take an interest. With the simplicity of the scholastic mind he delights rather to contrast the splendors of the rich; to the long trances of study, which have destroyed their sense of action, he is fond of opposing the rapid operation of the man of affairs; with their innocent and erudite senility he compares with malicious detail and innuendo the significant graces of the society lady, by whom their clumsy advances are repelled with such a grand disdain. His cynical frankness outrages the few prominent fellow-townsmen whom his cleverness had, perhaps, attracted. The local patriots are scandalized by his theory that Jeanne d'Arc was nothing more nor less than a mas-cotte. The magistrates are displeased by his humorous tirade against their admirable criminal procedure, and he deeply shocks M. Terremonde by his remarks upon the subject of the disaster at the Charité Bazar: "Un des chefs du parti catholique dans le département, vous devez savoir que votre Dieu montrait jadis aux âges bibliques un goût assez vif pour les sacrifices humains. . . . En ce temps-là Jéhovah ressemblait à son rival Chamos; c'était un être féroce, injuste et cruel. Il se montrait surtout friand de chair fraîche." It needed something more after this than his bare assertion to convince the worthy virtuoso that M. Bergeret was

not "un grand ennemi de notre religion." It is impossible, however, to give a brief instance of the manner in which the most venerated creeds and opinions crumble under the professor's learned persiflage.

It was natural that Mme. Bergeret should utterly fail to understand her husband: "Je ne te comprends pas, Lucien. Tu ris de ce qui n'est pas risible, et l'on ne sait jamais si tu plaisantes ou si tu es sérieux." She goes on to entreat M. Roux, her husband's favorite pupil (a young man of sanguine disposition, who alleviates his term of military service by systematic bribery, and explains that what renders military life tolerable is the stupor resulting from physical fatigue which acts as a kind of cotton-wool padding), to instruct Lucien in the art of conciliating people who are likely to be of service to his career. But Bergeret's mask of irony places an insurmountable barrier between him and those of his academic chiefs with whom he was most nearly allied by professional or political sympathy. In the typical provincial city of 150,000 souls, but five Dreyfusards were found, among them Bergeret and his colleague at the Faculty, M. Leterrier. The latter comes to encourage the Latin professor in his unpopular opinions with the sentiment that the truth embodies a force which renders it irresistible and ensures its ultimate triumph. But such a proposition was hardly likely to command the assent of M. Bergeret. Truth, he assures M. Leterrier, does not prevail; on the contrary, it generally perishes obscurely under public contempt and insult. As to the action of the mob which hurls abuse and stones at the Dreyfusards, he points out that there is much to explain, if not to excuse their conduct.

"Reflect," he says, "that truth has many evident points of inferiority as compared with the lie, which must

eventually lead truth to disappear. The lie, for instance, is multiple, and truth has against it numbers. This is not its only defect. Truth is inert; it is not susceptible to modification, it does not lend itself to combinations which enable it easily to enter either into the intelligence or into the passions of men. The lie, on the other hand, has marvelous resource. It is ductile, it is plastic. More than this, it is natural and even moral, inasmuch as it corresponds with the habits of man, who has based his ideas of good and evil upon the most holy and the most absurd of lies. The lie, therefore, becomes the principle of virtue and beauty in man, and the rejection of the lie in the search for truth can only be inspired by the culpable rashness of men of intellect. So slow, however, is the substitution of truth for falsehood, that a few simple lies will, for ages to come, continue to gild millions of existences." It is not to be expected that posterity will take a view essentially different or more enlightened than that of the present hour. Posterity is impartial only when it is indifferent; that which no longer interests it, it promptly and irrevocably forgets. The discourse that follows is, in effect, a beautifully written supplement to the pessimistic demonstration in Flaubert's "Bouvard et Pécuchet" of the extreme slenderness of the point of contact between erudition or scientific truth and the great struggling mass of humanity. In his peaceable disdain of mankind, Bergeret attains, perhaps, as near as possible to the superb resignation contained in that notable sentence with which *La Bruyère* opens his "caractère de l'homme:"

"Ne nous emportons point contre les hommes, en voyant leur dureté, leur ingratitude, leur injustice, leur fierté, l'amour d'eux-mêmes et l'oubli des autres. Ils sont ainsi faits, c'est leur nature."

It is not merely, however, as the

theory of a recluse that Bergeret's nihilism is exhibited, for it reaches its transcendent climax in connection with the one definite incident (apart from the intrigues of the various candidates for the see of Turcoing) round which the whole "*Histoire Contemporaine*" revolves. Every lover of Anatole France is familiar with the details of a scene which it were impossible, after him, to describe. It is enough to say that the conjugal mishap of M. Bergeret is treated with an originality which exhibits the writer's ironical powers at their very highest.

The reflections with which M. Bergeret reclaims his normal imperturbability of spirit afford a bird's-eye view of his whole attitude of mind. In words not at all dissimilar to those which Jérôme Coignard might have used, he fortifies himself with the thought that our pride is the primary cause of our miseries, that we are dressed-up apes, who have gravely applied ideas of honor and virtue to situations to which they are wholly inappropriate, that the world (as Pope Boniface VIII rightly held) makes a great fuss of a very small matter, and that Mme. Bergeret and M. Roux were in reality as unworthy of nicely calculated praise or blame as a couple of chimpanzees. His sense of humor was too strong for him to disguise the close relationship which existed between himself and this pair of primates, but he differentiated himself as being a meditative chimpanzee, and from this distinction it may not be denied that he derived a considerable amount of satisfaction.

After all, he concludes, the greatest service that one can render one's fellow-mortals is to recall to them their native ignominy, to humiliate them, to show the ephemeral character of their work, the futile imbecility of their pride. Brought back to the true sentiment of their condition, their existence

might, perhaps, be rendered happy enough. But they must always bear in mind that they are no more than a kind of leprosy, a morbid growth, a race of vermin upon the mouldy surface of a little ball which turns awkwardly round a yellow sun already half gone out.

In the ideas of Colgnard and Bergeret we probably get the closest view attainable of the deliberate conclusions of the subtlest and most refined artist and thinker of our time. As a sceptic, M. France doubts everything, and in all things discovers the secret defect; as a dilettante he amuses himself by the constant change and succession of forms which men are so curiously apt to denominate progress. But, starting from the pessimistic conviction of the incurable badness and weakness of humanity, he is finally touched by the wretchedness and instability of human destiny, and ends by demanding that men should judge one another with a "scetticismo caritatevole."<sup>1</sup>

Sceptical and even cynical though the majority of his later work is, M. France's judgments are never uncharitable, and the element of compassion is rarely absent. Few passages in the "Histoire" are more delightful than those in which he dwells upon the humblest aspects of life. One of the pleasantest glimpses that we have of Bergeret is the scene in which, while reposing under his favorite *ormes du mail* and meditating in his usual depreciatory manner upon the rhetorical militarism of the eighth book of Virgil and the grotesque manner in which certain Latin poets have been overrated, he encounters the *chemineau*, or tramp, named "Pied d'Alouette." He has a ready sympathy with the poor jail-bird, who has nothing dangerous about him, unless it be his rooted belief in happiness. "Where, then," says the professor,

"are the happy ones to be found?" "In the farmhouses," is the prompt reply. Bergeret got up and placed a half-franc in Pied d'Alouette's hand. "You think, Pied d'Alouette, that happiness is to be found under a roof, in a chimney corner, or a feather bed. I thought you had more good sense." The poor *chemineau* takes the place of the cobbler in Lucian's famous dialogue upon the vanity of riches, while Bergeret, ruminating upon the dry scraps of learning in his "Vergilius Nauticus," is left wondering where the happiness of erudition comes in. Charming, again, as a pendant to the vignette of Bonnard and his cat is Bergeret's meditation over a canine foundling which he adopts and befriends with an unaffected sympathy:

"'Il est joli!' dit la servante.

"'Non, il n'est pas joli,' dit M. Bergeret. 'Mais il est sympathique, et il a de beaux yeux. C'est ce qu'on disait de moi,' ajouta le professeur, 'quand j'avais le triple de son âge et pas encore la moitié de son intelligence. Sans doute, j'ai depuis lors jeté sur l'univers une vue qu'il ne jettera jamais. Mais au regard de la vérité absolue, on peut dire que ma connaissance égale la sienne par sa petitesse. C'est comme la sienne, un point géométrique dans l'infini . . .'

"'Il faut lui donner un nom.'

"La servante répondit en riant, les mains sur le ventre, que ce n'était pas difficile.

"Sur quoi M. Bergeret fit intérieurement cette réflexion, que tout est simple aux simples, mais que les esprits avisés, qui considèrent les choses sous des aspects divers et multiples, invisibles au vulgaire, éprouvent une grande difficulté à se décider même dans les moindres affaires."

It will be seen that, far as M. France has travelled in other respects since he achieved his first great triumph with "Bonnard," his ironic temper is still

<sup>1</sup> Vittorio Pica, Letteratura d'eccezione, 1890, 288.

qualified by the same deep compassion for the weak and the humble. The juxtaposition of the two qualities is elevated into an article of faith by the writer in his admirable book of *Pensées* ("Le Jardin d'Epicure," 1895).

"Plus je songe à la vie humaine, plus je crois qu'il faut lui donner pour témoins et pour juges l'Ironie et la Pitié . . . L'Ironie et la Pitié sont deux bonnes conseillères; l'une en souriant nous rend la vie aimable; l'autre qui pleure, nous la rend sacrée."

To avoid a weak compliance with the vulgar practice of eulogy was, in Lucian's opinion, the first and most imperative duty of the historian. In his "Histoire Contemporaine" M. France has most emphatically not fallen into this pitfall. He has nowhere recklessly flattered his contemporaries; he is never the sycophant of his own generation. The publicists of the hour seem, in fact, to have irritated M. France by their blatant optimism, much as the charlatans and the thaumaturges of Syria and Greece, with the metallic timbre of their voices and the majesty of their long beards, afflicted the satirist of Samosata seventeen hundred years ago. In England, where we are often abused by a foreign press, but have not, like our neighbors, the advantage of being persistently and solemnly lectured upon our delinquencies, the need for a contemporary historian would seem to be even greater than in France. As a corrective to the monotony of those rhapsodies upon our noble selves, with which every paper and platform in the land is forever resounding, the value of an English satirist, of the calibre of M. Anatole France, could hardly be overrated.

His tableau of modern French society is a satire of the most uncompromising severity; but is its severity greater than its substantial truth? M. France's credibility gains enormously

from the fact that he is in no possible sense a critic who has failed. In England we are, of course, far from unfamiliar with the pessimistic tone that he most naturally adopts. It is scattered up and down the author of the "Whirlpool," and it reaches a very poignant note in Amy Levy's "Minor Poet." One is, perhaps, rather inclined to associate this heartfelt disdain of an unappreciative world with the mental processes of the minor poet, though in the case of the greatest of men the conjunction of bitterness and failure is sufficiently common. The bitterness of Swift was, in part at least, due to this cause, and the philosophic despair of Bolingbroke was, in the main perhaps, the despair of office. But Anatole France is not in any sense a failure—he, a man of humble birth, a native of the *Qual Malaquais*, who has by the sheer force of wit scaled the barriers of exclusiveness and entered the most aristocratic *coterie* of the Académie. From his youth he was *très livresque*, and his early books are characterized by an erudition from which he distils a honey that has always a certain acidity of flavor. But it is in his latest series of volumes, upon every page of which is impressed his profound knowledge of human nature, that the doctrine of Nihilism stands out so boldly as the fruit of his mature reflections not only upon books, but also upon men and women. The commerce of books and the habit of intense reflection and self-analysis have fitted him in a degree that has never been excelled to fulfil the function of an author as he has specially conceived it—as that of an ironical critic, namely, who from a quiet and sheltered nook of observation can meditate at his ease upon the clamor and the folly—occasionally pathetic, but more often purely ridiculous—of his fellows in the dusty market-place.

*Thomas Secombe.*

## THE HEART OF DARKNESS.\*

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

## VI.

"I laid the ghost of his gifts at last with a lie," he began suddenly. "Girl. What? Did I mention a girl? O, she is out of it—completely. They—the women, I mean—are out of it—should be out of it. We must help them to stay in that beautiful world of their own, lest ours gets worse. O, she had to be out of it. You should have heard the disinterred body of Mr. Kurtz saying, 'My intended.' You would have perceived directly then how completely she was out of it. And the lofty frontal bone of Mr. Kurtz! They say the hair goes on growing sometimes, but this—ah—specimen was impressively bald. The wilderness had patted him on the head, and behold, it was like a ball—an ivory ball; it had caressed him, and—lo!—he had withered; it had taken him, loved him, embraced him, got into his veins, consumed his flesh and sealed his soul to its own by the inconceivable ceremonies of some devilish initiation. He was its spoiled and pampered favorite. Ivory? I should think so. Heaps of it, stacks of it. The old mud shanty was bursting with it. You would think there was not a single tusk left either above or below the ground in the whole country. 'Mostly fossil,' the manager had remarked. It was no more fossil than I am; but they call it fossil when it is dug up. It appears these niggers do bury the tusks sometimes—but evidently they couldn't bury this parcel deep enough to save the gifted Mr. Kurtz from his fate. We filled the steamboat with it and had to pile a lot on the deck. Thus he could see and enjoy as long as he could see, because

the appreciation of this favor had remained with him to the last. You should have heard him say, 'My ivory.' O, yes, I heard him. 'My intended, my ivory, my station, my river, my—' everything belonged to him. It made me hold my breath in expectation of hearing the wilderness burst into a prodigious peal of laughter that would shake the fixed stars in their places. Everything belonged to him—but that was a trifle. The thing was to know what he belonged to, how many powers of darkness claimed him for their own. That was the reflection that made you creepy all over. It was impossible—it was not good for one, either—to try and imagine. He had taken a high seat amongst the devils of the land—I mean literally. You can't understand. How could you—with solid pavement under your feet, surrounded by kind neighbors ready to cheer you or fall on you, stepping delicately between the butcher and the policeman, in the holy terror of scandal and gallows and lunatic asylums; how can you imagine what particular region of the first ages a man's untrammelled feet may take him into by the way of solitude—utter solitude without a policeman—by the way of silence—utter silence, where no warning voice of a kind neighbor can be heard whispering of public opinion. These little things make all the great difference. When they are gone you must fall back upon your own innate strength, upon your own capacity for faithfulness. Of course you may be too much of a fool to go wrong—too dull even to know you are being assaulted by the powers of darkness. I take it no fool ever made a bargain for his soul with the devil. The fool is

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too much of a fool, or the devil too much of a devil—I don't know which. Or you may be such a thunderingly exalted creature as to be altogether deaf and blind to anything but heavenly sights and sounds. Then the earth for you is only a standing place—and whether to be like this is your loss or your gain I won't pretend to say. But most of us are neither one nor the other. The earth for us is a place to live in, where we must put up with sights, with sounds, with smells, too, by Jove—breathe dead hippo, so to speak, and not be contaminated. And there, don't you see, your strength comes in, the faith in your ability of digging unostentatious holes to bury the stuff in—your power of devotion, not to yourself, but to an obscure, back-breaking business. And that's difficult enough. Mind, I am not trying to excuse or even explain—I am trying to account to myself for—for—Mr. Kurtz—for the shade of Mr. Kurtz. This initiated wrath from the back of Nowhere honored me with its amazing confidence before it vanished altogether. This was because it could speak English to me. The original Kurtz had been educated partly in England, and—as he was good enough to say himself—his sympathies were in the right place. His mother was half English, his father was half French. All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz, and by and by I learned that, most appropriately, the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs had intrusted him with the making of a report for their future guidance. And he had written it, too. I've seen it. I've read it. It was eloquent, vibrating with eloquence, but too high-strung, I think. Seventeen pages of close writing he had found time for! But this must have been before his—let us say—nerves went wrong, and caused him to preside at certain midnight dances, ending with

unspeakable rites, which—as far as I reluctantly gathered from what I heard at various times—were offered up to him—do you understand?—to Mr. Kurtz himself. But it was a beautiful piece of writing. The opening paragraph, however, in the light of later information, strikes me now as ominous. He began with the argument that we whites, from the point of development we had arrived at, must necessarily appear to them (savages) in the nature of supernatural beings—we approach them with the might as of deity, and so on, and so on. 'By the simple exercise of our will we can exert a power for good practically unbounded,' etc., etc. From that point he soared and took me with him. The peroration was magnificent, though difficult to remember, you know. It gave me the notion of an exotic immensity ruled by an august benevolence. It made me tingle with enthusiasm. This was the unbounded power of eloquence—of words—of burning, noble words. There were no practical hints to interrupt the magic current of phrases, unless a kind of note at the foot of the last page, scrawled evidently much later, in an unsteady hand, may be regarded as the exposition of a method. It was very simple, and at the end of that moving appeal to every altruistic sentiment it blazed at you luminous and terrifying, like a flash of lightning in a serene sky: 'Exterminate all the brutes.' The curious part was that he had apparently forgotten all about that valuable postscriptum, because, later on, when he in a sense came to himself, he repeatedly entreated me to take good care of 'my pamphlet' (as he called it), as it was sure to have in the future a good influence upon his career. I had full information about all these things, and, as it turned out, I was to have the care of his memory. I've done enough for it to give me the indisputable right to lay it, if I choose, for



an everlasting rest in the dust bin of progress, among all the sweepings, and, figuratively speaking, all the dead cats of civilization. But then, you see, I can't choose. He won't be forgotten. Whatever he was, he was not common. He had the power to charm or frighten rudimentary souls into an aggravated witch dance in his honor; he could also fill the small souls of the pilgrims with misgivings; he had one devoted friend at least, and he had conquered one soul in the world that was neither rudimentary nor tainted with self-seeking. No, I can't forget him; though I am not prepared to affirm the fellow was exactly worth the life we lost in getting to him. I missed my late helmsman awfully; I missed him even while his body was still lying in the pilot house. Perhaps you will think it passing strange, this regret for a savage who was no more account than a grain of sand in a black Sahara. Well, don't you see, he had done something, he had steered; for months I had him at my back—a help—an instrument. It was a kind of partnership. He steered for me—I had to look after him. I worried about his deficiencies, and thus a subtle bond had been created, of which I only became aware when it was suddenly broken. And the intimate profundity of that look he gave me, when he received his hurt, remains to this day in my memory—like a claim of distant kinship affirmed in a supreme moment.

"Poor fool! If he had only left that shutter alone. He had no restraint—no restraint—just like Kurtz—a tree swayed by the wind. As soon as I had put on a dry pair of slippers, I dragged him out, after first jerking the spear out of his side, which operation I performed with my eyes shut tight. His heels leaped together over the little doorstep; his shoulders were pressed to my breast; I hugged him from behind desperately. O, he was heavy, heavy;

heavier than any man on earth, I should imagine. Then, without more ado, I tipped him overboard. The current snatched him as though he had been a wisp of grass, and I saw the body roll over twice before I lost sight of it forever. All the pilgrims and the manager were then congregated on the awning deck about the pilot house, chattering at each other like a flock of excited magpies, and there was a scandalized murmur at my heartless promptitude. What they wanted to keep that body hanging about for I can't guess. Embalm it, maybe. But I had also heard another and a very ominous murmur on the deck below. My friends, the woodcutters, were likewise scandalized, and with a better show of reason—though I admit that the reason itself was quite inadmissible. O, quite! I had made up my mind that if my late helmsman was to be eaten, the fishes alone should have him. He had been a very second-rate helmsman while alive, but now he was dead he might become a first-class temptation, and possibly cause some startling trouble; besides I was anxious to take the wheel, the man in pink pajamas showing himself a helpless duffer at the business.

"This I did directly the simple funeral was over. We were going half-speed, keeping right in the middle of the stream, and I listened to the talk about me. They had given up Kurtz, they had given up the station; Kurtz was dead, and the station had been burned—and so on—and so on. The red-haired pilgrim was beside himself with the thought that at least this poor Kurtz had been properly revenged. 'Say! We must have made a glorious slaughter of them in the bush. Eh? What do you think? Say?' He positively danced, the bloodthirsty little gingery beggar. And he had nearly fainted when he saw the wounded man! I could not help saying, 'You made a glorious lot of smoke, anyhow.' I had

seen, from the way the tops of the bushes rustled and flew, that almost all the shots had gone too high. You can't hit anything unless you take aim and fire from the shoulder; but these chaps fired from the hip with their eyes shut. The retreat, I maintained—and I was right—was caused by the screeching of the steam whistle. Upon this they forgot Kurtz and began to howl at me with indignant protests.

"The manager stood by the wheel murmuring confidentially about the necessity of getting well away down the river before dark at all events, when I saw in the distance a clearing on the river side and the outlines of some sort of building. 'What's this?' I asked. He clapped his hands in wonder. 'The station!' he cried. I edged in at once, still going half-speed.

"Through my glasses I saw the slope of a hill interspersed with rare trees and perfectly free from undergrowth. A long decaying building on the summit was half buried in the high grass; the large holes in the peaked roof gaped black from afar; the jungle and the woods made a background. There was no enclosure or fence of any kind; but there had been one apparently, for near the house half a dozen slim posts remained in a row, roughly trimmed, and with their upper ends ornamented with round, carved balls. The rails, or whatever there had been between, had disappeared. Of course the forest surrounded all that. The river bank was clear, and on the water side I saw a white man under a hat like a cart wheel beckoning persistently with his whole arm. Examining the edge of the forest above and below, I was almost certain that I could see movements; human forms gliding here and there. I steamed past prudently, then stopped the engines and let her drift down. The man on the shore began to shout, urging us to land. 'We have been attacked,' screamed the manager.

'I know—I know. It's all right,' yelled back the other, cheerful as you please. 'Come along. It's all right. I am glad.'

"His aspect reminded me of something I had seen—something funny I had seen somewhere. As I manoeuvred to get alongside, I was asking myself, 'What does this fellow look like?' Suddenly I got it. He looked like a harlequin. His clothes had been made of some stuff that was brown holland, probably, but it was covered with patches all over, with bright patches, blue, red and yellow patches on the back, patches on front, patches on elbows, on knees; colored binding round his jacket, scarlet edging at the bottom of his trousers; and the sunshine made him look extremely gay and wonderfully neat withal, because you could see how beautifully all this patching had been done. A beardless, boyish face, very fair, no features to speak of, nose peeling, little blue eyes, smiles and frowns chasing each other over that open countenance like sunshine and shadow on a wind-swept plain. 'Look out, captain!' he cried; 'there's a snag lodged in here last night.' What! Another snag? I confess I swore shamefully. I had nearly holed my cripple, to finish off that charming trip. The harlequin on the bank turned his little pug nose up to me. 'You English?' he asked, all smiles. 'Are you?' I shouted from the wheel. The smiles vanished and he shook his head as if sorry for my disappointment. Then he brightened up. 'Never mind!' he cried, encouragingly. 'Are we in time?' I asked. 'He is up there,' he replied, with a toss of the head up the hill, and becoming gloomy all of a sudden. His face was like the autumn sky, overcast one moment and bright the next.

"When the manager, escorted by the pilgrims, all of them armed to the teeth, had gone to the house, this chap came on board. 'I say, I don't like this. These natives are in the bush,' I said.

He assured me earnestly it was all right. 'They are simple people,' he added; 'well, I am glad you came. It took me all my time to keep them off.' 'But you said it was all right,' I cried. 'O, they meant no harm,' he said; and, as I stared, he corrected himself, 'Not exactly.' Then, vivaciously, 'My faith, your pilot house wants a clean-up!' In the next breath he advised me to keep enough steam on the boiler to blow the whistle in case of any trouble. 'One good screech will do more for you than all your rifles. They are a simple people,' he repeated. He rattled away at such a rate he quite overwhelmed me. He seemed to be trying to make up for lots of silence, and actually hinted, laughing, that such was the case. 'Don't you talk with Mr. Kurtz?' I said. 'You don't talk with that man—you listen to him,' he exclaimed, with severe exaltation. 'But now—' He waved his arm, and in the twinkling of an eye was in the uttermost depths of despondency. In a moment he came up again with a jump, possessed himself of both my hands, shook them continuously, while he gabbled: 'Brother sailor—honor—pleasure—delight—introduce myself—Russian—son of an archpriest—government of Tambov—what? Tobacco! English tobacco; the excellent English tobacco! Now, that's brotherly. Smoke? Where's the sailor that does not smoke?'

'The pipe soothed him, and gradually I made out that he had run away from school, had gone to sea in a Russian ship; ran way again; served some time in English ships; was now reconciled with the archpriest. He made a point of that. 'But when one is young, one must see things, gather experience, ideas, enlarge the mind.' 'Here!' I interrupted. 'You can never tell. Here I have met Mr. Kurtz,' he said, youthfully solemn and reproachful. I held my tongue after that. It appears he had persuaded a Dutch trading

house on the coast to fit him out with stores and goods, and had started for the interior with a light heart, and no more idea of what would happen to him than a baby. He had been wandering about that river for nearly two years alone, cut off from everybody and everything. 'I am not so young as I look. I am 25,' he said. 'At first old Van Shuyten would tell me to go to the devil,' he narrated with keen enjoyment, 'but I stuck to him and talked and talked, till at last he got afraid I would take the hind leg off his favorite dog, so he gave me some cheap things and a few guns, and told me he hoped he would never see my face again. Good old Dutchman, Van Shuyten. I've sent him one small lot of ivory a year ago—so that he can't call me a little thief when I get back. I hope he got it. And for the rest I don't care. I had some wood stacked for you. That was my old house. Did you see?'

'I gave him Towson's book. He made as though he would kiss me, but restrained himself. 'The only book I had left, and I thought I had lost it,' he said, looking at it ecstatically. 'So many accidents happen to a man going about alone, you know. Canoes get upset sometimes—and sometimes you've got to clear out so quick when the people get angry.' He thumbed the pages. 'You made notes in Russian?' I asked. He nodded. 'I thought they were written in cipher,' I said. He laughed, then became serious. 'I had lots of trouble to keep those people off,' he said. 'Did they want to kill you?' I asked. 'Oh, no!' he cried, and checked himself. 'Why did they attack us?' I pursued. He hesitated, then said, shamefacedly, 'They don't want him to go.' 'Don't they?' I said, curiously. He nodded a nod full of mystery and wisdom. 'I tell you,' he cried, 'this man has enlarged my mind.' He opened his arms wide, staring at me round-eyed.

## COWPER'S OUSE.

The Great Ouse is undistinguished among western waters; his very title is disputed by the channel in which the united rivers of Yorkshire find their way to the Humber; and yet he is the fifth largest English river.

His is no impetuous stream, tearing down to the sea in a bed that is sometimes water, sometimes heaps of stones; he pursues a temperate career, never runs dry, and is seldom overfull. The fortresses of more troubled days are no longer reflected in his waves; no legends of hard riding Dick or other heroic robber linger in the memories of those who dwell on his sedgy banks; not even the genius of Sir Walter could weave romances in which the Ouse would play a part. He has never been a border river since the days of the Danelagh; he belongs to the Midlands, and has had no occasion for those strings of castles which once defended and now adorn the Tweed, the Tyne, the Severn and the Wye.

In the region of Newport Pagnell the Great Ouse first begins to be a noticeable river; here is the head on which are set his two horns. From the south-east comes the Little Ouse, Ousel, or Lovat, thus variously named, after collecting half the waters of the Chiltern Hills and draining the eastern region of the Vale of Aylesbury; the Ousel is still little better than a large brook, but has already travelled some score of miles. The other horn, the Ouse proper, has gathered his peaceful flood in the western uplands of Northamptonshire. His longest tributary may be traced beyond Brackley to the neighborhood of Banbury, and, being fed by numerous winding brooks, takes the shape of a river not many miles to the west of Buckingham. Eight miles below the little borough which gives

its name to a county, the Ouse receives at Wolverton the waters of the Tone. Here in the early days of railways, trains stopped half-way between London and Birmingham to give weary travellers the opportunity of rest and refreshment; and here the valley is crossed by a viaduct, which was once considered an imposing triumph of engineering. From Wolverton to Newport Pagnell is by road four miles, by river nearer ten, and there the larger stream takes up his little brother for the rest of their winding ramble to the German Ocean.

Nobody ever set out to reach a given destination with less anxiety about eventually arriving there than the Ouse, when he decided that, after leaving Newport Pagnell, it was as well to go to Bedford. Being a river-god he may be credited with wisdom superior to that of mortals; and perhaps he was right in expatiating in his meadows, listening to the clatter of his poplar leaves, taking his pastime in broad deeps, and ever and anon losing his way among beds of reeds. The upshot of it all is that, whereas mere men make it a thirteen-mile walk, our river travels forty, and is eventually so reluctant to pass under the graceful bridge by the Swan hotel, that the Midland Railway crosses him seven times in the seven miles between Bedford and Sharnbrook.

This sort of conduct might be pardonable in a nymph or other light-hearted feminine divinity, but in a sober old river calls for reprobation. Father Thames shakes his head over it, pointing to his own noble curves, and even the twisting Tees thinks there should be a limit to capriciousness, though his conscience is a little uneasy about his performances in the neighbor-

hood of Darlington. He, however, can plead mountains at his source, mountains without lakes, always trying to a river that wishes to be respectable. But the Ouse knew what was to happen to him; he knew that he would be caught up by Dutch engineers at Ear-lith, and that the better part of him, hemmed between earth-works, would have to run in two parallel straight lines across the Fens to enter the Wash at Lynn through an ungraceful cut; and thus he made his playground in the broad meadows above Bedford before departing for those regions where unlovely science was to prevail over his artless whims.

The valley between Newport Pagnell and Bedford is Cowper's country. It is here that the Ouse gives us a scenery all his own, as he travels in his leisurely way around three sides of a quadrilateral tableland, whose greatest elevation is nowhere more than four hundred feet, but whose flanks descend to the meadows with some suddenness in places, and yet with no precipitous rudeness. The floor of the valley is flat, sometimes a mile across, sometimes a few hundred yards, and the river shifts from side to side as his fancy leads; but wherever he hugs the slopes, his stream is deep and broad and clear. It is the reproach of sluggish rivers that they are muddy, but not so the Ouse. A narrow fringe of water lilies on either shore marks the limit of earthiness; between those the channel, twenty to forty yards in breadth, is apparently paved with stone, for a twelve-foot punt-pole grates along the rocky bottom. As our river never discloses the dark secrets of his bed like the shameless Tees, we can only guess at the causes of this absence of sediment in his still deeps, and may conjecture springs breaking into his channel from below, sufficient in quantity to carry away, even in summer-time, the light depos-

its of a stream not subject to the violent incursions of mountain torrents.

The Ouse has never been a highway of any importance; he cannot boast of a romantic population of bargees like the Thames, or his own tributary, the Cam, which brings him much mud and no less learning, let us hope, from Cambridge. Commerce does not trouble a river that has no commodity to send seawards, except such fruits of the earth as, in the present decay of English agriculture, we are more apt to receive from beyond the German Ocean than to transmit to our neighbors. As far up as Bedford there are locks, but above Bedford not only have we those sevenfold windings which rival Styx "nine times interfused," but the river, in so much of his course a natural canal, deliberately places a well-considered impediment in the way of such as might be tempted to burden him with the vulgarities of trade, for when he elects to leave the slopes on one side or the other of his valley, and cross the meadows, he straightway breaks up into two, or even three, narrow and frequently shallow streams, and thus continuing for a mile or so, defies any but the smallest boats to travel on his current; whence it has happened that a river some two hundred and fifty miles long, running through fertile land in a populous country, has only one town of any great importance on its banks. Buckingham, Bedford, Huntingdon, are, indeed, county towns, but the first of the three is little better than a village; Bedford owes its recent expansion, not to trade, but to John Harpur, the benefactor of its schools; Huntingdon is at most a couple of sizes bigger than Buckingham; even Ely, the largest of the Ouse towns before we reach the sea, was made by monks, not by merchants, and is indebted to its cathedral, not to its trade, for such fame as it enjoys. At King's Lynn alone does



commerce fairly lay her hand upon the river, King's Lynn, from whence started so early as 1330 A.D., the first expedition in search of the North Pole; it was conducted by one Nicholas, a Carmelite Friar, who set out for the Arctic regions relying on his astrolabe, and, so the chronicles of Lynn inform us, was reckoned to have got there.

Action and the Ouse are out of harmony; from the time when Canute paused upon his waters to listen to the singing of the monks of Ely, his heroes have been men of religion rather than of war. True, there is one notable exception; Oliver Cromwell was a son of the Ouse, but a large part of him was in the traditions of his native stream. Oliver, the saint, had mused for many years among the meadows between Huntingdon and Ely, before he became Oliver, the man of war; and the warrior was not content with beating the Scots in the field of Dunbar; he set his heart no less on achieving a controversial victory over the Presbyterians at Edinburgh, where, indeed, he was confronted with greater stubbornness.

In the Wars of the Roses, Olney and Emberton witnessed the return of the King-maker, and the dispersion of the northern forces under Sir John Conyers and Robin of Redesdale; but these events have left no local record.

In the seventeenth century the restless Catesby had a house at Hardmead in the hills, four miles from Olney; Gayhurst, the home of Sir Everard Digby, a house well known to Cowper, is not far off, and the young knight was entangled in Catesby's madcap scheme by the agency of Father Garnett; whence came local traditions of underground passages at Gayhurst, of Digby's hole, a secret way to the river. Sir Kenelm Digby also lived at Gayhurst, and left a trace of himself in a breed of edible snails, which he imported for the benefit of the incompar-

able Venetia; they were held by the faculty of those days to be good food for consumptive persons. The villagers of Gayhurst have not long ceased to look for "Digby's hoddies."

And Bunyan, too, is of the Ouse; was not the greater part of the "Pilgrim's Progress" written in Bedford Gaol? There are records of his preaching at Olney and other places along the river.

Legh Richmond, the well-known writer of Evangelical stories, was rector of Turvey for thirty years; in fact, the theological attitude of the river has always been in the Evangelical direction. There were monasteries near his banks, but they did not flourish; the religious houses at Bradwell, Tickford, Ravenstone, Lavendon, Turvey, were already far gone in decay at the Dissolution, and were never on the scale of the great Cistercian establishments of the north. It was the Evangelical element at Olney that brought to the Ouse its inspired worshipper, who was to give the river such fame as it might otherwise have missed. Cowper's connection with the Ouse began at Huntingdon in 1763, and ended at Weston Underwood in 1795; for the whole of those thirty years he never left its banks except for one visit of six weeks to Hayley's home in Sussex, towards the end of the period.

Olney in itself is not a particularly attractive little town; it can boast a noble church, but there is little else in it to excite the attention of a visitor. It was not Olney, but Olney's curate, that caused the place to be selected as the poet's residence; but though Olney is not itself beautiful, the surrounding country is very beautiful indeed, and the more romantic splendors of the lakes have failed to inspire prose or verse more delightful than the letters and poems of William Cowper.

The second Earl of Dartmouth married the heiress of one Sir Charles



Nicholl, an extensive landowner in Olney and the district. In his youth the Earl came under the influence of the famous Countess of Huntingdon, and was, like her, a leader in the Evangelical world, in the world of Whitefield and Wesley. He does not appear to have resided in his wife's house at Olney, but he was much interested in the spiritual welfare of the little place; by his recommendation the Reverend John Newton was appointed curate at Olney, nor did he withhold his countenance from Sutcliffe, the great Baptist preacher, from whose seminary at Olney went Carey, the missionary and orientalist. Five miles off, at Newport Pagnell, was one of the earliest Congregational churches; on the hill at Clifton Reynes the rector was a noted Evangelical, Mr. Jones, the brother-in-law of Lady Austen. In those days the line between Nonconformist Evangelicals and Church of England Evangelicals was not rigidly drawn; what they had in common was more than that in which they differed; clergymen of the Church of England, who were at all earnest, had more sympathy with the Baptist Sutcliffe and the Congregational Bull than with fox-hunting country parsons or the prelates of the court. Thus the Methodist movement was stronger then in country districts than it is now; it was supported by the wealthy and refined, as well as by small tradesmen and artisans. Not only Lord Dartmouth, but other country gentlemen and ladies in the Olney neighborhood favored the Methodists. The result was the society to which Mrs. Unwin brought Cowper.

The virtues of Mrs. Unwin have become an article of faith with many lovers of Cowper. The poet's exquisite expression of his attachment to her; the high value which he set upon her literary judgment; the tenderness with which he waited on her decline; the

beautiful pictures which he has drawn of their domestic life; her own long patience under the anxieties of his weak mental health,—all these combine to form a picture of human relations so full of charm, that those who have once realized it resent any change in the arrangement of its lights and shadows. If, however, we are to do justice to our poet, it is due to him to pursue some inquiry into the features in his intellectual history, in his artistic life, which were introduced or, at any rate developed, by the influence of Mrs. Unwin. We may grant as a defect in the poet's organization that he was one of those men who cannot walk of themselves, who are by the law of their nature dependent upon the judgment of some other person, whose affection imposes upon them a loss of liberty. It was necessary that Cowper should rely upon somebody; but it was not necessary that he should rely upon Mrs. Unwin. Many a woman has laid upon the object of her devotion a yoke which was never felt, and never consciously attached. The truest affection, resulting in mutual self-sacrifice, may exist between husband and wife, and yet the partner who is apparently the gainer, may really be the loser in the partnership; this is particularly apt to be the case when one of the partners is an artist, and the other a very loving, but only an ordinarily well-informed human being.

Cowper was by birth and education a member of the English aristocracy; he was a classical scholar of considerable attainments; he was exceptionally well read in English literature; he was no milksop; as a schoolboy he was distinguished in athletics; he was humorous, witty, merry and affectionate, with an unusual power of attracting friendship, especially the friendship of women and young men, and this power he retained to the last years of his life. It is exceptional for a man of

sixty to love or be loved by a new acquaintance; but Cowper won the heart of his distant cousin, John Johnson, a Cambridge undergraduate, who called on him at Weston, when he was nearly sixty; this new acquaintance afterwards cared for and tended him with no less assiduity than Mrs. Unwin, and in circumstances no less, if not more, painful. Among Cowper's many bright, affectionate letters few are more bright and affectionate than those to his young relative.

Mrs. Unwin was the daughter of a linen-draper at Ely. There is no crime in being the daughter of a linen-draper, but distinctions of rank and distinctions of training were much sharper in the middle of the eighteenth century than they are now. She was by birth and association far removed from the world in which Cowper had been brought up. She is said to have been pretty and witty. Her husband was a clergyman, very much older than herself, who lived the life of an absentee rector at Huntingdon, where he took private pupils, and held the post of reader in the church. The immorality of absenteeism was not regarded in those days with the same rigor that it is now; but the Unwins lived the life of Methodists. A day with them was divided between public and private prayers, pious conversation and pious reading, enlivened by the singing of hymns to the accompaniment of Mrs. Unwin's harpsichord. It seems strange that such good people should not have thought of their parishioners at Grimston, and should not have seen some incongruity in the comfortable profession of religion at Huntingdon, while they were drawing a stipend from their neglected country parish.

Two years before Mr. Unwin's sudden death, Cowper arrived at Huntingdon. He had just recovered from his first severe attack of mania and wished to live in the country near his brother,

who was a fellow of Benet College, Cambridge; suitable lodgings could not be found within a shorter distance. At first he lived alone, except for the attendance of a man-servant, whom he brought with him from the private asylum in which he had been cured; then he was attracted by young William Unwin, who was just finishing his course at Cambridge and was shortly to take orders. He was introduced to the family; the liking was mutual, and eventually Cowper begged to be allowed to take the place of a pupil in the house. A year later Mr. Unwin was killed by a fall from his horse. He seems to have expressed some wish that in the event of his death, Cowper might continue to live with his widow, and the arrangement was acceptable to both parties. Cowper speaks of the maternal affection of Mrs. Unwin for him, and his filial tenderness towards her.

Just at this moment John Newton, who had recently been appointed curate at Olney, happened to come to Huntingdon. His preaching attracted Mrs. Unwin, who made his acquaintance, and asked him to find a house for herself and Cowper in Olney or its immediate neighborhood. This was done, and in 1767 began Cowper's long life at Olney.

There could have been no more unfortunate arrangement. Cowper's malady was that terrible mania of morbid fear impelling the sufferer to self-destruction; before and after an attack he was given to religious questionings, not of a particularly gloomy character, being indeed such as are often indulged in by those in good health. Occupation was good for him, was indeed necessary alike for his bodily and mental health; but excitement was deadly. His first attack was brought on by a dread of having to appear in the House of Lords and prove himself qualified to be a clerk of that

august assembly, for he had a horror of publicity in any form.

This being the case, and Mrs. Unwin knowing that it was the case, he was taken by her and handed over bodily to the care of a revivalist preacher of an energetic and noisy type. John Newton had been a sailor before the mast; having been a profane swearer like Bunyan, he had been converted by a special interposition of Providence on his behalf in a rescue from shipwreck; he had then been captain of a slaver, and eventually a tide-surveyor at Liverpool. This post he gave up to take orders, impelled by a sense of duty and fitness. He believed in special interpositions of Providence, even in trivial matters, in sudden conversions; he was in many respects a Calvinist, but not a gloomy one. His preaching was such that the people of Olney attributed cases of insanity to its effects. It was to this Boanerges of a man that Mrs. Unwin brought Cowper, the tender, shrinking, refined, delicate scholar, suffering from a definite nervous malady.

Newton, a thoroughly good-hearted and affectionate man, took possession of Cowper; for thirteen years they were hardly separated for more than twelve hours out of the twenty-four, except when a recurrence of Cowper's insanity rendered his seclusion necessary. Newton rode about to the different villages in the neighborhood, holding open-air meetings, preaching in cottages, praying by death-beds. In all these Cowper accompanied him; long prayer-meetings were held in Lord Dartmouth's empty house at Olney, and Cowper, to whom "publicity was poison," was encouraged to take a leading part in them. The result was very soon a recurrence of his malady, which lasted in all for eighteen months, in an acute form for six; and the pair of well-intentioned blunderers allowed their friend's illness to grow on him for more than a year before they thought of consulting Dr.

Cotton, who had cured him at St. Albans.

This was not the whole of the injury which Mrs. Unwin did to Cowper. She estranged him from his relations, or, rather, allowed an estrangement to continue which had begun at the period of his first illness. What Cowper lost by this we may gather from his first letter written to his cousin, Lady Hesketh, in reply to one of hers after a silence of nineteen years. The delight with which Cowper recurs to the innocent pleasures of his youth, to the days that were spent in "giggling and making giggle," his almost painfully eager anticipations of the joy of seeing his old friend again, are expressed as though by a man starving for sympathy, who has suddenly realized all that he had foregone, and is impatient of any delay in returning to happier scenes. Newton left Olney, fortunately for Cowper, in 1780, and the succeeding ten years were the happiest of Cowper's life after his first breakdown. There was another gleam of light, a break in the clouds of Unwinism in which Cowper had allowed himself to be enveloped. This was the intercourse with Lady Austen, which began almost immediately after Newton's departure; it is to this that we owe "The Diverting History of John Gilpin" and "The Task."

There can be no possible doubt that Mrs. Unwin was jealous of Lady Austen; and there can be no less doubt that she had reason to be jealous. She had been engaged to marry Cowper, but the contract was broken off at the time of his madness at Olney. She saw that "brother William and sister Ann" could not continue to live on those terms, though Cowper might choose to please himself with the simile of a three-fold cord of which she was herself one of the strands. But the moment Cowper realized that he had entered upon more than friendly relations with Lady Austen he broke the connection. Could a

woman desire more than this? Apparently Mrs. Unwin was not satisfied, for she allowed Cowper to write as follows to her son after Lady Austen had left Olney:

You are going to Bristol. A lady, not long since our nearest neighbor, is probably there, she was there very lately. If you should chance to fall into her company, remember, if you please, that we found the connection in some respects an inconvenient one; that we do not wish to renew it; and conduct yourself accordingly. A character with which we spend all our time should be made on purpose for us; too much or too little of any ingredient spoils all. In the instance in question the dissimilitude was too great not to be felt continually, and consequently made our intercourse unpleasant. We have reason, however, to believe that she has given up all thoughts of a return to Olney.

It took Cowper three years to find out the unpleasantness of this painful dissimilitude. He writes in his own name and Mrs. Unwin's, who might surely have written to her son herself, and spared Cowper the humiliation of this disingenuous and ungenerous epistle. Cowper had satisfied all that Mrs. Unwin could possibly demand; he had sent Lady Austen away; he had practically, if not actually, said that he felt himself so bound to Mrs. Unwin that he could marry no one else; could she not have let the matter be? Cowper could have had no fear that Lady Austen would attempt to renew the intercourse by the mediation of young Unwin; he was a gentleman, and Lady Austen was a lady; in fact, Mrs. Unwin, like many other beneficent men and women, was over-tenacious of her power, over-apprehensive of its loss. She had made Cowper quarrel with Lady Austen once before, and there had been a reconciliation; this time she was determined not to risk the fruits of vic-

tory by any possible oversight. She was not, however, permanently cured of her jealousy; a little postscript to a letter of Cowper, addressed to Lady Hesketh, written and signed by Mrs. Unwin at a later time, shows that there were still occasional quarrels with Cowper's friends.

In fact, Mrs. Unwin was not of Cowper's world; she was not of his intellectual world any more than she was of his social world. Under Newton's influence Cowper could only write hymns; under Mrs. Unwin's, rather commonplace satire or mild preaching; it was Lady Austen who showed him what he could do with the incidents of everyday life, and who elicited from him the matchless descriptions in "The Task." Mrs. Unwin restricted his reading to the Bible, the newspaper and devotional works; under Mrs. Unwin's influence he pours contempt on geology and astronomy, and gives advice about the reading of the Bible which would inevitably lead us to the abysmal ignorance of the Boers. Mrs. Unwin tolerated his humorous side, his powers of dramatic description; Lady Austen and Lady Hesketh enjoyed them. It is to Mrs. Unwin that we owe the popular conception of Cowper as a mild, mad man, who kept tame hares and wore a white cap. But the real Cowper was a finished gentleman, running over with fun and laughter, particular about his personal appearance, able to be accepted on his own terms by the Wrights of Gayhurst, the Chesters of Chicheley and, above all, by his delightful "Mr. and Mrs. Frog," the Throgmortons of Weston Underwood.

The excitements of society were too much for Cowper's delicate nerves, nor had he any sympathy with sport; he preferred taming hares to chasing them, watching birds to shooting them; but he also loved the intimate companionship of a few chosen friends, and he could always find them. Such inter-

course was good for him, better for him even than visiting the sick in their homes, and other active charities in which he was engaged. Cowper was no respecter of persons; he made friends in all classes of society; he is as proud of the affection of his man Sam as of that of Mrs. Courtenay, "my lady of the ink-bottle," and when living at Olney he would run across the road with his last copy of verses to Mr. Wilson, the barber, a genial tonsor, who is still remembered by old residents in Olney, and whose shop was the informal club of the little town.

We may give Mrs. Unwin her due; devoting herself to Cowper as few would have done, she nursed and cared for him in every way; we may respect her devotion, and yet we must regret her limitations. She went the wrong way to work to effect the restoration of his health, and who knows what he might have done had he been in the habit of reading with a woman of more profound literary accomplishments?

In spite of Mrs. Unwin's restrictions, Cowper remains one of the few consummate masters of the English language. His letters are generally admitted to be incomparable, the high-water mark of pure, light, easy English prose; the words and the ideas fit like a glove; both are alike graceful and delicate. Not that Cowper could not be stern upon occasion; he is, perhaps, the only one of Dr. Johnson's contemporaries who could pass an unfavorable criticism upon him with no sense of temerity. There are strong bits of satire in his poetry, as well as those that are weak, and even when his religiosity offends us we would do well to remember that what he says is frequently worth saying, though the form in which it is said has gone out of fashion; nor is he deficient in shrewdness and strong common sense. As a descriptive poet

he has never been surpassed; he is minute in his observation and yet has the gift of selection; he loved the scenes in which his innocent life was spent, perhaps more than Dr. Johnson loved Fleet Street.

It is a misfortune that the best-known portraits of Cowper, those which have been most frequently reproduced, represent him in a strange white cap, and have thus contributed to make us think of him solely or chiefly as eccentric. The children of Weston Underwood, during the last years of the poet's residence on the Ouse, when his suicidal mania was talked about in the locality, were much terrified by this cap; but we are not children, and even though Cowper was sometimes insane, have no right to despise his teaching on that account. Dr. Johnson was subject to melancholy, though in a less degree than Cowper, but we do not consider him effeminate; both were devoutly pious. The cap in question was worn by all gentlemen in the time of perukes, who did not wish to spend the whole of their day magnificently bewigged. Cowper's was a particularly smart affair, made for him by Lady Hesketh, and adorned with a ribbon and a bow. Hogarth has represented himself in a similar cap; but we do not suspect him of too much mildness.

The best picture of Cowper is probably that in the National Portrait Gallery; it was painted by Romney at the same time as the better-known one, in which a stagey effect is produced by the position of the eyes, as of one listening for inspiration. The less-known portrait represents the poet with a silk handkerchief thrown over the back of his head, which is inclined forward; full justice is done to the delicate lips and the earnest eyes. Romney seems to have kept this more natural study, and it was sold with the rest of his effects.

At Weston Underwood, Cowper was well above the Ouse, and could look



from the upper windows of his house across the river, and beyond the high ground of Filgrave to the Brickhills, and even down the valley of the Ousel to the distant Chilterns, a smiling but almost mountainous prospect; for it is one of Ouse's tricks to veil his gentle slopes in such a gauzy haze as gives the effect of steep hills and mighty distances. Behind Weston is Yardley Chase, with the great oaks that Cowper worshipped. The tree to which he addressed an unfinished poem is polarded; the real monarchs of the forest are two, a little further from Weston, which he used often to visit, and sometimes known as Gog and Magog. One of them, however, is also known as Judith, and there is a tradition that it was planted by, or in honor of, the Countess Judith, half-sister of William the Conqueror, to whom the greater part of the surrounding country was given by her brother. The trees are certainly of very great antiquity, and the fact that they alone, among the ancient oaks of the forest, have been left unpolarded, indicates some special association.

The last years of the poet's life at Weston are painful to think of. Mrs. Unwin was breaking down, and Cowper, from having been patient, had become nurse; insanity gained upon him, and took a new form, which was aggravated by the foolish ministrations of a foolish schoolmaster at Olney. Still, there were lucid intervals, and not unfrequent flashes of the old bright wit. In 1795 his cousin Johnson removed the invalids to Norfolk. Mrs. Unwin died the following year, and at the end of April, 1800, Cowper's tortured clay found rest.

A century has passed since Cowper rambled by the Ouse—a century of unparalleled movement in all that advances the material resources of mankind—and yet how little we are changed! The Frenchman still hates

an Englishman as he did when "The Task" was written; England is again at war in one of her colonies; the Evangelical movement has done its work, and quieted down; but is Cowper's call to greater earnestness any less necessary to-day than it was a hundred years ago? Amusement still takes the first place in the thoughts of the many; the drunkard still staggers in our streets; behind the noble frontages of our expanded towns there is still the squalid heap of derelict humanity. Cowper does not bid us to be gloomy; his call is not to asceticism, but to a recognition that there is something more to be lived for than the satisfaction of our own desires. Particular forms of recreation were needlessly offensive to the society with which he lived. We smile when we find him dealing no less severely with a clergyman who played the violin after service on Sundays, than with his sporting neighbor. His detestation of card-playing appears to us out of proportion; but then we have forgotten what card-playing meant in those days—what an endless waste of time, of health, of money. Whenever we are disposed to be annoyed with Cowper's disproportionate censures we must recall the circumstances in which he lived, the dependence upon others imposed by his malady, and the not altogether happy fate which determined those who should control his destinies at a critical period of his life. Surely there must, after all, have been an enormous vitality in the man to write as much as he did, and as well as he did, placed as he was.

Of all our teachers Cowper is the most sincere; he lived as he preached, brightening the common things of life with humor, sanctifying them with love; and this is why the gentle Ouse has its votaries. It is impossible to dissociate his water-lilies and his reeds, his poplars and his willows, his broad



meadows and wooded slopes, from the memory of the man of whom it was said: "If there is a good man living, it is William Cowper."

The country has but little changed in the course of a century. The ruins of Capability Brown's exploits are still traceable at Weston; the square tower of Clifton still looks down upon the spire of Olney; there is still a clump of poplars at Lavendon Mill; there is still a wealth of flowering rushes with their cherry-scented blossoms, of broad-leaved plants varying the monotony of the reeds, of purple loose-strife, of blue forget-me-not. An adventurous holiday-maker who could, for a couple of days, forego the delights of dusty roads and the rushing wheel might find a less agreeable pastime than a voyage in a canoe from Newport Pagnell down to Turvey. Thus he might bathe himself

in the atmosphere which was breathed by no mean English poet, gliding beneath hills clothed with trees, or between wide meadows; but he would do well not to surrender himself unguardedly to the calm pleasure of plain sailing, lest he should rue his error lost in the mazes of a reed-bed. Failing this adventure his events will be the scream and flash of a kingfisher, or the sulky croak of a heron disturbed in his meal of freshwater mussels.

From Turvey to Bedford the journey is well enough for a while, but he must, indeed, be fond of water-ways who does not weary of those seven-fold wanderings of the river below Sharnbrook; and yet these also are sacred to the memory of a poet. It was here that Edward Fitzgerald used to dream and fish. Omar Khayyam and Cowper meet upon the Ouse.

Macmillan's Magazine.

*J. C. Tarver.*

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### THE NORTH.

Other skies of stainless blue,  
Stranger seas and olive heights  
Rival not the master hue  
Of the shore where rainbow lights  
    Drift in heaven, and seaward sink  
    Down the gray horizon's brink.

Therefore when the hours are told  
And the shredded wracks are pale;  
And wide shafts of dusty gold  
Roof the memories of the gale—  
    Moulded waves that vastly ride  
    Through the lull of eventide—

I will praise the gusty thrill  
And the tingle of the North;  
Through the unsubstantial chill  
It is mine to hazard forth,  
    Straining for the western gleam  
    In the likeness of my dream!

The Speaker.

*E. S. P. H.*

## THE SHAME OF WILLIAM DANBY.

A new curate was coming to the parish church, and there was a flutter of interest, not, it is to be feared, exclusively spiritual.

The marriage-garden of Kirkholm relied for a good deal of its husbandry upon young clergymen and young doctors, and perhaps the solid influence of Archdeacon Whittaker owed more than he knew to the eligibility of his curates. For many years past he had given no title to a candidate without sufficient social claims, and the falling-in of little livings kept happy time with the engagements of his staff. Only one of the parish clergy had married out of the congregation—and he was, exemplarily, a curate still. Consequently people spoke with more than titular respect of "our Venerable Archdeacon," and little oddities as a preacher—such as a tendency to lose his place and to give the same sermon on two successive Sundays—were treated with smiling toleration.

"Preaching, indeed!" said Mrs. Whitworth, whose daughter Lillian was very nearly engaged to one of the four curates; "it is practice that tells. Look at that Pollock person!" (Mr. Pollock was the vicar of St. Ann's). "You'd think from his sermons the man was really in earnest, and yet when he comes down from the pulpit how does he behave? 'Bear one another's burdens,' indeed—and three married curates running!"

"But he is a very hard worker," Lillian remarked. "He has done a great deal among the poor."

"Oh, no doubt, no doubt," answered her mother; "we hear far too much about the slums. The lower classes are very well off. It's we that are the poor. I don't pity your mill-hands at all—who minds what class they travel? It's the

comfortably off that must go somewhere for a holiday, and wear decent gloves and have hot joints for dinner, that I am sorry for. The poor! Rubbish!"

"He is coming on Friday," said Dora, the youngest daughter, when this irrelevance showed symptoms of subsiding, "and he preaches at the iron church on Sunday evening."

"Then I hope," said Mrs. Whitworth, "they will have the seats cleaned. I really don't know what they want with a chapel of ease at that dirty end of the town. Ease, indeed! Ease ought to begin with an *f* and another letter. We must ask him to supper, poor, lonely young man."

"Mr. How should be told to bring him," said Dora. "Had not you better write, Lil?"

"Nonsense," said Lillian; "why should I write?" Mr. How was her particular curate.

Sunday came and there was a large congregation at the chapel of ease. Mrs. Whitworth, after a hasty conference with the verger and a little flapping of his gown, sat down in a front seat, supported by Mrs. Bagwell and Miss Amy Finch. The two Whitworth girls had declined to be thrust into such extreme prominence. A modesty ill-requited by Mrs. Sedgwick, for she beckoned up her own young ladies, after the service had begun, knowing that Emma looked almost pretty when she blushed. There was a little coolness between the heads of the Whitworth and Sedgwick household, consequent upon that, but happily it did not involve the girls, who respected one another's love of fair play.

"I am so sorry, Dora," Julia Sedgwick said, when the service was over, and the young people were walking home in a cluster. "Mother meant kindly..

of course, but I hope you don't believe—"

"Of course not," said Dora. "Well, what do you think of him?"

"Oh, when he falls over his surplice rather less, and can find his way a little in the prayers and does not drop his voice so much, and gives out some of the right hymns, we shall be able to judge better."

"He's nothing to Mr. Richardson," Lillian said. "Don't you remember we heard him muttering to himself 'Oh, dear me, dear me!' and he ran his poor hair up into positive spikes. This one—Mr. Danby—was not so bad as that."

"But how unlucky that he could not discover how to get into the pulpit. I really thought he would have to climb up, hand over—Oh!"

There was a voice in Julia's ear. "I beg your pardon," it said. "I believe I—er—"

All the girls turned round and there was the new curate bowing and smiling.

"How has been called to a sick case," he said; "may I introduce myself?"

He shook hands all round with the disconcerted girls. Then he turned to Julia.

"There ought to be a finger-post," he said, "glancing towards the pulpit."

"Oh, pray forgive me," said Julia, "but of course—"

"Why, what is there to forgive? You were very kind, I am sure."

"On the whole we really were complimentary."

"Oh, were you?—I think *that* must have been before I came up. Your kindness seemed to me of the castigating kind."

"Oh, that is ungrateful. Why, we said you did not—"

"I can claim no credit for that. My hair won't go into spikes."

At the corner the Sedgwicks said good-bye, and the Whitworths carried home their prize.

By comparison he really was rather a prize. At any rate, he was not a blank. His manners were perfectly easy, and his conversational powers above the modest Kirkholm average. The only thing that went at all against the grain of approval was his silence concerning his family. Little half-queries elicited no information, and to direct interrogation even Mrs. Whitworth would not at once proceed. There was time enough for that. *Prima facie* a gentleman, with an Oxford degree, and a name pleasantly suggestive of noble connections—the young man deserved every encouragement.

"Now come often," said Mrs. Whitworth, when he rose to say good-bye. "Come whenever you feel inclined—whenever you feel lonely. You are sure to find some of us in, and there's always enough for supper."

"How could you say that, mother?" Lillian asked, when the young man had gone. "Bread and cheese, and the cold ends of pudding."

"There are tins in the cupboard," said Mrs. Whitworth, loftily. "Besides, he'll have the sense to go in time. I hope there is nothing wrong about his connections."

"Why, if it comes to that," said Dora, "look at Uncle Joe."

"No, Dora," answered her mother. "I will *not* look at Uncle Joe. I prefer to look at Aunt Basset and Cousin Catherine. Your Cousin Catherine might have been Lady Mudge."

At the sound of that dreaded name the girls took their candles. Mrs. Whitworth mounted upon the possible Lady Mudge was too high for anything.

"I like him, Lil," said Dora when the girls were in their own room.

"Strange," Lillian answered, "when he showed such a marked antipathy to you."

Young Mr. Danby was soon in a fair way to become notable among the Archdeacon's successes. Having at

length overcome those initial difficulties enumerated by Miss Sedgewick, he won much favor in the pulpit. It was a long time since the parish church had been blessed with an extempore preacher. Though a few people complained that Mr. Danby's arguments had a tendency to fade imperceptibly away, and that, while some of his sentences terminated with singular abruptness, others did not terminate at all, the mass of the congregation congratulated itself on having got one of the right sort. It was felt that while he wanted to say something and couldn't, the average curate wanted to say nothing and could. "Ay," chuckled the old illiterates, "but it's nice to hear a bit of talk." That was, indeed, a fair description of the young man's pulpit style. It was pervaded by an earnest familiarity. It had no eloquence, no brilliancy, no distinction. It lacked the ozone of intellectuality, the delicate airs of suggestion. It touched a few problems, and it yielded many stories. It left the imagination unfed, but it button-holed the conscience. "He gives it you," remarked a toper, who had come to hear him, "as straight as the missus on Saturday night." In a little while it became evident that the people looked out for the new curate's turn. The church was always full when it was known that he was going to preach.

It cannot be pretended that this popularity excited no bitterness in the clerical bosom. The senior curate reluctantly admitted his disgust. "Hitherto," he said, "the parish church has not been sensational. We have left that sort of thing to St. Ann's and the Bethels; I wonder the dear Archdeacon stands it."

"Come!" said How; "Danby is a really good fellow. He is thoroughly in earnest."

"Oh yes," answered the senior, lifting a refined hand and pushing vulgarly gently away, "your bull of Bashan al-

ways is, but a man can be in earnest without letting himself down. I'd rather see the church empty than tell anecdotes about little boys being run over and saved by Bibles in their breast-pockets, and soldiers converted by screws of tobacco done up in leaves of 'Songs and Solos.'"

"It's a matter of taste," said How.

"Yes, and I can't get the taste out of my mouth. He makes the better sort horribly uncomfortable."

"But we make them a great deal too comfortable. I, for example, as is only too evident, am a powerful soporific."

"Better send them to sleep with sound dogma than make them blubber with Moody's stories. I wish Danby well—and well out of the parish church."

And something of that sort really did eventuate.

Danby was told off more and more for chapel-of-ease duty, until his work amounted to a sole charge of Back End. Back End might have smelt no sweeter under a rosier name, but it certainly fell short of fragrance under its own.

It was not until he had entered into the husbandry of that neglected vineyard that the young man's quality came out. He threw himself heart and soul into the work. The little chapel was crowded to the doors. His best sermons were preached out of church. In a little while there was not a child whose name and character he did not know, nor a man for whose wages he could not account. He invaded public-houses at the cost (not entirely to himself) of beautiful black eyes. He instituted or vitalized clothing clubs, night schools, mothers' meetings, cottage lectures, a crèche, a boys' brigade, a cricket club, a gymnasium, a library. He walked arm in arm with oily men, not in condescension, but in natural goodfellowship. His pockets bulged with half-pounds of tea. And when the present was made he asked to have a cup with the happy old lady, and he

drank it conscientiously out of his saucer. (That was a piece of serpentine beguilement.) Often for a week together he was hardly out of his clothes.

The Archdeacon rubbed his chin and wondered, the senior curate lifted his hands and clucked. "There is one comfort, anyhow," he said. "We have isolated him. He won't spread."

It was hardly likely that Danby's crusade would enlist feminine enthusiasts. The two Whitworth girls (Mr. How, now engaged to Lillian, generously devoted her to the work) were among the best and stoutest of his recruits. It was quite true that Mrs. Whitworth was only a lukewarm convert to Mr. Danby's methods, and her distrust of the chapel seats became more deeply grounded than ever. She began, however, to hear rumors that authorized a wide toleration. Back end was in a fair way to be made a separate district.

Meanwhile Mr. Danby had not "said anything" to Dora, and mystery still enshrouded his family.

One evening, when the young man had found time to play a game of tennis, and even to indulge in a subsequent cigarette, Mrs. Whitworth took him in hand. It happened that there had lately settled in Kirkholm, a certain Mr. Rigby, fair, forty and not fat, and more than well enough to do. Mr. Rigby had asked with some significance, to be introduced to Dora.

"Mr. Danby," the matron began, "I don't know what witchcraft you use. Think of my girls going slumming as they do! and Dora such a little aristocrat and all!"

"Is she that?" the curate asked.

"I wonder you have not found it out. Even from a child she shrank from anything that was not—what shall I say?—unexceptionable. She never had any patience with parvenus. Wrong, of course," Mrs. Whitworth added,

with a splendid smile, "but perhaps she learned that from her mother."

"After all," the curate said, "so long as people are decently bred—"

"Oh, that is not everything, Mr. Danby; there is a great deal in nice connections. I think, by the way, your family came from—?"

There was no interruption of information, and Mrs. Whitworth added "Norfolk?"

"No," he answered. "I don't think I have any relations there."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Whitworth. "Whenever you feel disposed to talk a little about your people we should be so much interested."

"I hardly think so," he said; "we are not, except to ourselves, a very interesting, or a very—" At that moment Lillian came up and led the curate away.

When Danby reached home that night he found a letter that had arrived by the evening's post.

"From mother," he said, as he opened it; "it is not often that she writes."

The letter ran as follows:

My Dear Son,—Your poor father died last night. The clergyman was with him, and he had not much pain. He sent his duty to you and was sorry to be such an expense. He blamed the drink for all this trouble. My dear son, I have what will do me for the funeral, and when I have him buried I would dearly like to come and manage for you. Them landladies is great old rogues, and I have nobody but you now the old man is gone. He used me very bad, but I will be lonesome all the same. The Lord forgive him!—he was a fine figure of a man and a clever tradesman too, but he would not mind himself.

I remain, your affectionate mother,  
Norah Danby.

Oh, it is the empty house and heart that I will have when they takes him away. It is a lovely coffin entirely.

The tears gathered in the young man's eyes. "Poor dear old mother."

he said. "Of course you shall come to me. Perhaps if I had done my duty . . . but no! there was no chance for father. Only a miracle could have saved him. God grant his end was peace."

He sat down and wrote a warm-hearted reply.

"Mother," he said. "I have a little house all to myself, and we will be happy together. There are still fifty pounds of Uncle Robert's legacy left, and I have saved a little besides. We shall be able to get along very nicely, and the old time shall come back, and nobody shall worry you any more. I long to see your sweet old face again, which I have not beheld for four—nearly five—years. Mother, I could not help speaking to father if I came, and you know how mad it made him if I did. It was best then that we should be apart, but now we must never part again."

He concluded with an offer to come over and help the winding up of his mother's small affairs, if his presence seemed at all needful; only just hinting that any saving that could be effected was not to be despised.

"Well, that's done," said Danby to himself, as he sealed the letter. The *functum est* covered more than that epistle. In the step which he had taken Danby saw the end of a dream—a dream that had grown very dear.

He was in love with Dora Whitworth, and, but for the need of summoning his mother, he would have cherished a good hope of winning his way at last. Hope, as things were shaping themselves, must be kicked out of doors.

Danby lit his pipe and paced slowly to and fro, chewing the cud of bitter thoughts.

"Upon my word," he said to himself, "the worst turn you can do a young fellow is to give him a lift in life. You're sure to lift him a step higher than ever he can safely stand. Good old

Uncle Willie! If you had not made me a most unlucky parson, I might have been a happy—well, what should I have been?—a shoemaker? Yes, say a shoemaker. Cobbling is rather a nice trade, I fancy, and the cure of soles for which I was intended. I might have been a gentleman without my h's instead of a cad with them. Oh, Uncle Willie, I wish you had never seen that chandlery store in Johannesburg. The candle was not worth the game."

So the young man mused, growing sarcastic and cynical, in the sharpness of his hurt. But that was not his natural vein. He was at least and at worst a sweet-hearted fellow, and then he loved his work.

"No," he said, "I would not have lost my chance here for all other chances. I must make the best of things. Who knows? . . . perhaps she might . . ." and then he stopped again. "No! It's all over *there*. She has looks and a little fortune, and the might-have-been of Lady Mudge. It is expecting too much. She could never bear up against her mother. Better have your tooth out when you know it is bound to ache. To-morrow I'll—well, I'll—yes, I'll see; and then!"

He got no farther than that, and it was not quite a terminus. Still, to have resolved that he would resolve was some kind of comfort.

Danby went to bed, and, finally, to sleep—that sort of sleep wherein the mind, harrassed and hampered, toils fruitlessly through all the worries of the day, rearranging things with endless ineffectual shifts, weaving laborious webs that drop apart, and reviewing its own efforts all the while in paralyzed despair.

He got up and had his first experience of nerves. Hitherto he had regarded them as an idle invention of idle women.

But bath and breakfast and a bright sun put in a little word; and there was



something in it. He went out and talked to Teddy Thwaites, while his poor leg was being dressed; then he gave his lesson at the school, and after that he called on Molly Dawson. Molly was an old woman of eighty-four, who could sometimes see a little out of one of her eyes, but had few other corporal accomplishments. She lived on four shillings a week and a cheerful heart. Danby always went to Molly when he wanted a tonic.

Just as he was feeling for his hat, the door opened, and there entered Dora. Dora, with morning blushes on her cheeks, and half a pound of tea in her basket.

"If I don't have it out to-day," Danby said, reverting to that dental resolution, "I'll loosen it a bit."

"Good-bye, Molly," said the two young people together.

"That I may live to see it!" was Mrs. Dawson's response, as she grasped a hand of each. "Oh, then, that I may live to see it!"

The meaning of the old woman's words was not ignored without an embarrassing effort. Dora was more successfully unconscious than Danby; perhaps because he could not help detecting a kind of opening in the speech.

"May I walk with you?" he said to Dora. "Let me take your basket." So they went on together.

How is it that, in deprecation of the meditated stroke, there comes so often some appeal, as poignant as unconscious? Why does the doomed horse whinny at one's voice, and the doomed dog crawl to lick one's hands? How comes that look on Duncan's sleeping face? Why is Desdemona's prattle so innocent and sweet?

Has Heaven decreed that none shall ever reach another's heart but through his own?

Never had Dora been so kind, so prone to little confidences, so sure of sympathy, as on that ruthless walk.

Danby groaned within himself. It was going to be worse than he thought. He could not begin. Opening after opening crumbled and slipped away. He was too nervous to make a hand of the thing. Still, finely or clumsily, the thing could be done. It is not hard to hurt those who care for us. Any word will do it. Nay, it does not need a word at all. A look—a silence—is enough. Sympathy is sensitive as a mirror. An atmosphere will cloud it.

Danby said—something. He did not know what. But it went home. He saw the start as it struck, the flush of incredulous surprise; the tears that came and went back. And then Dora had herself in hand, and was no more a woman, but a young lady.

But Danby could not stand it.

"Dora," he said, "I am so unhappy."

She turned round so sweetly, and looked at him with such a tender anxiety, while she rested her hand for a moment on his arm, that the end, for good or evil, was very nearly coming.

It was only by a violent effort that he constrained himself, and did not tell her—well, many things. As it was, he apologized for his bad temper, pressed her hand—and carried off the basket.

He would have liked to tell her all about himself—his humble birth, his drunken old father, his dear old peasant mother, his dubious old Uncle Willie, and his legacy of three hundred pounds invested in an Oxford degree. But to-day he felt that he could not disclose so much without disclosing a good deal more. And for that he believed the time had not come. Knowing Mrs. Whitworth, it did not seem to him fair to expose his love to what must certainly ensue. She would be reproached, worried, made unhappy. Even if she heartily desired the match, Mrs. Whitworth would obstruct it—so far as she safely could. Gentility and the Mudge possibilities demanded so much of her. With that well-to-do stranger

offering attentions to Dora, she would seriously oppose any definite understanding between her daughter and himself. He must wait till—in silence or thunder—the stranger had rolled by. Knowing Dora's feelings on that head (that slightly bald head) he was not afraid to abide the issue.

The next day he went out resolved to make a clean breast of it, so far as his mother was concerned. But he came back without that interior ablution. It was of no use. Dora was too delightful. Her mood was so sunny that he had to make hay in it. There would not be many more days like that, for, take it as she might, his revelation would cost her something. It would be a serious trouble at the first. So he said nothing—nothing, at least, that requires repetition. Haymaking does not favor intellectual talk.

The next day—prematurely—right on the heels of her telegram—Mrs. Danby came. Since his absorption in the Back End work had become complete, Danby, as has been mentioned, had had a little house to himself.

The Archdeacon having furnished it, William had found an old woman who could cook chops (about half-way through) and hew potatoes into many-angled shapes, and even, when politeness required, halloa from above or below—not apparently from the level—"Well, what is it now?"

This old woman, as it happened, only that very afternoon had announced her intention of being married, and the necessity of withdrawing to look after her bridegroom, lest he should be backing out of it. Danby had told another old woman to come in and take occasional exercise in patten, but now, moved by what feeling he hardly knew, he paid ten shillings forfeit-money, and broke the bargain off.

"Mother would hate to have anybody about," he said to himself; but he re-

ceived the explanation with some distrust.

It was late when the train came in, and there were few people on the ill-lit platform. William was glad that the meeting would have hardly any witnesses—and was ashamed of his gladness. What would his mother be like? It was five years since he had seen her. Older, of course, she would be—but—?

Ah, the train was in. He was going to see her now, and to have the answer to that question which he would not allow himself to ask.

Yes, there she was—getting out; that was the figure—stouter, much stouter than of yore—and that, oh! that was her voice.

"Young man, I'll trouble you to hand me out this trunk, and—come here to me now—where would I find the Reverend William Danby?"

Nothing about "my son"—yes, he recognized the relief in that forbearance. It was of no use. She was worse than he had expected. He was ashamed of his mother.

He hung in the shadows and let the porter attend to her.

When she was safely shut into a fly, he started after it, taking a short back way. But he overheard one porter say to another, "Mr. Danby's new housekeeper, I suppose. A liberal old Irish body. Gave me a shilling, she did."

Stinging tears came into William Danby's eyes. He knew the meaning of that shilling. She was acting up to the dignity of being his mother.

His little house stood in happy isolation. A high wall and a three-cornered bit of garden stood between it and prying eyes. William, arriving first, saw the luggage stormed and taken by the fly-man and a man whom he had signalled by the way, and the fly driven off, before he entered to claim his mother.

At last, sick with shame at the effort that it cost him, he flounced into the

little hall, and crying "Welcome, mother! welcome to our little house!" clasped her in his arms.

She was so glad to see him—so happy and proud and fond—that for a little while he forgot all but her tears and the tender effusion of her speech.

But that was soon over. He led her into the sitting-room, and turned up the lamp, and then . . .

Oh, it was worse than his worst fears. Face, figure, speech—what had the five years made of them?

He put himself in Dora's place, and came to his mother fresh and unprepared.

The coarse black-country twang, grafted upon a deadly Limerick brogue, the towed hair, the more than dubious hands, the excited manner, the loose, dragged smartness—oh, it was all terrible, terrible. Every exaggerative phrase, every effusive gesture, stung like a lash.

Once, in the stress of suffering, he groaned aloud. And then his mother's coarseness fell away like a vulgar cloak flung aside. The point of view was changed. He was a boy again, lying sick in bed, listless and weary, and she was bending over him, all tenderness, all knowledge and comfort and patient ministration; a sympathetic extension of his own frets and cumbered longings, divining the drift of needs that he could only feel in foiled confusion. In those days he always thought of angels as stout, and breathing visibly through blue and white aprons; not quite completely hooked at every point, and apt to lose a slipper as they hovered round in ministration.

"Willie, avick!" It all came back upon the breath of those two words, as his mother laid her hand upon his brow, and asked "If the poor head was very sore with him?"

So for the rest of that night they were happy together.

But in the morning all was wrong

again. Danby found his mother, marvellously girt about, with a face that seemed to be keeping Ash Wednesday, preparing breakfast, amid extraordinary havoc and dismay. She was more vulgar than ever in the daylight. Oh, this was what he never could have believed. But he forced himself, and kissed her with what seemed to him expansion, and was, he verily believed, kind and warm.

At breakfast he spoke about getting a servant, but Mrs. Danby would not hear of that. She had no opinion at all of girls, and, indeed, she was well able to do for her son's house.

William deferred to her views. In truth, they fell in with his own secret desire. If a maid came in the news went out; and, for the present, the news was best indoors.

He must prepare Dora. He must break his mother gently.

When he had unpacked the large brown trunk and had undertaken to send in the little things that would be needed for the day, Danby wished his mother good-bye, and set forth upon his visiting. Suddenly, however, he reappeared.

"Oh, by the way," he said, standing with his back to Mrs. Danby, and staring out of the window, "in case anybody comes, there might be no harm—in fact, I think I wouldn't—you see, nobody has had a hint of it, and it would be taking the town rather short . . . no, I wouldn't say anything at present."

"I wouldn't understand you, darling," said Mrs. Danby; "sure, I'm no way given to gossip, and what acquaintance would I have in this strange place?"

"Exactly. I wouldn't make any friends at first—not till you know who they are; and I wouldn't tell them who *you* are."

"Indeed, Willie, I never make no freedom with the people . . . but I must be very stupid entirely this morn-

ing, for I wouldn't see the meaning of this at all, saving just to mention my—"

"I wouldn't even mention that—I would leave people to think just what they like."

"Very well, Willie—whatever you please."

"Yes, I would leave them to guess for themselves. Unless you liked to say"—Danby had moved towards the door, and the last words were flung out carelessly from the step—"you had come to keep my house."

"Quite right, Willie. I'll say that to be sure. I'll give it out that I'm your housekeeper."

She spoke with an even intonation, more quietly than usual. Danby feeling that the matter was a little delicate, heard her answer with relief.

"Well, just for the present, he said, carelessly, "till we have had time to look round us. Good-bye, mother; take care of yourself."

"No fear, darling," she answered, "no fear," and Danby walked away, whistling.

As soon as the sound of his steps had passed, Mrs. Danby flung out her hands and cast her eyes upward, in a gesture of adjuration, almost of imprecation.

"He is ashamed of me," she said; "my Willie is ashamed of me;" and sank into a chair, sobbing aloud. Then she pressed her forehead hard, and said, with slow, deliberate articulation, as though to convince herself by testimony from without of something hard to be received or grasped, "My Willie—is ashamed—of his mother."

The words died away; her hands sank upon her lap; and for many minutes she sat with fixed eyes that saw nothing, motionless as a stone.

Alas, how easy some shameful deeds are made to us! What gentle slopes lead our deceptions on? Often, ere we lift a finger or breathe a word, our

very wish rides forth, crying before us, "Prepare the way; make sin's rough places smooth."

Before William had walked a hundred yards he chanced upon Amy Finch, high placed by many as Kirkholm's chief authority on other people's business.

"Why, Mr. Danby," Amy said, "I hear you have a new housekeeper come."

"Yes," he answered, taken at unawares, "and I think she will do very well."

No further announcement was needed. Six consecutive advertisements would have secured a less piercing publicity.

Danby's intention was, as soon as his morning round had been performed, to call at Mrs. Whitworth's and begin his revelation. By easy degrees he would prepare his love for the reception, first moral, then physical, of Mrs. Danby.

Confused and unhappy, compassed by uneasy visions of rocks and shoals ahead, William worked through his heavy morning duties, and then, in fulfilment of his purpose, set his face towards Whitethorn Lodge.

But before half the way was accomplished, behold! a voice behind him! He turned, flushing with pleasure, for it was *the* voice.

"Well, Mr. Danby," said Dora, "what dark secret are you revolving now?"

"Secret?" he answered, quickly; "why do you say that?"

"Dear me!" she said, "we are very literal to-day. Pray don't scowl at me. Really, I have not discovered any guilty secret—it's only the new Irish housekeeper."

"Oh," he said, "is that all? How do you know she is—Irish?"

"Bedad," she answered. "'tis aisy knowing that same. Isn't meself just aafter shpaking to her? Oh, Mr. Danby, can't I do Irish gloriously?"

"Yes," he answered. "Better than the Irish."

So the feet of William sank deep and deeper into the slough. In a little while the sucking lips had risen so high that struggling seemed hopeless. Self-extrication was impossible. He must wait for Luck's kind hand. He was very miserable. His work suffered. His health suffered. He grew peevish and hypochondriac. He thought about little but himself and his love, and the unworthy behavior of Fate.

He did not notice anything about his mother—except her untidiness and her vulgarity. And yet other things were noticeable enough—as, for example, her paleness, her loss of appetite, her drawn mouth and weary, sleepless eyes. She never left the house. She spoke to nobody but her son; and that in his present mood was not an all-satisfying exception.

One afternoon in March—a day of rushing clouds and gusty flutterings—William ran hastily into his house. All that day, as it happened, he had not seen his mother. Except for their unpunctual punctuality his meals had been prepared as usual. But Mrs. Danby had remained invisible. There was nothing very remarkable in this. She had come to recognize, William fancied, his dislike of slipshod, for of late she had isolated more or less her extremest deshabilles, taking her meals at these times somewhere out of sight.

Dashing in now he looked around for Mrs. Danby. She was not where that hour usually found her, blending belated washing-up with premature schemes for tea. William ran up to her little room and knocked.

"Mother," he said, in much excitement, "there are three ladies coming to tea: Mrs. Sedgwick, and Miss Amy Finch, and Miss Dora Whitworth. Do have things all right. I've brought three cakes and two dozen muffins, and biscuits and—"

"Oh, the poor fellow!" interrupted his mother's voice. "He has enough for a besieged city."

"You will have things nice, won't you, mother?"

"And wouldn't I do credit to my own son? But I doubt the fire went out on me. No matter—no matter. Wait till I have the boots on to my feet, for I was very sick all this day."

"Yes, and your voice sounds queer. I wouldn't have asked them if I had thought; but you will manage somehow, won't you?"

"I will then. I will. Only leave me free, for I'd be nervous being watched."

William ran down, blew up the languishing kitchen fire, and set forth upon the tray of elegance his afternoon service. It consisted of a brown-ware teapot, two breakfast cups (one of them with a handle), two solid tea-cups, presented severally to "James" and "A good girl," a really generous slop-basin and a blue-paper bag of sugar.

A good fire was burning in the little study, and fortunately some of the smoke was going up the chimney. Desparing of accomplishing anything amid the complex litter of the table, William cleared a little space upon the harmonium where the tray might safely repose, whipped his old coat and slippers into the magazine (and general) heap in the corner, covering them decently with yesterday's *Kirkholm Times*, collected the straggling pipes and dropped them behind the books on his big shelf, and then he was ready to receive.

It was well, for a minute later there were steps on the ash-path. He went to the door and led the ladies hospitably in.

"I am afraid it is rather rough," he said, complacently, as he set chairs and a box. "But I know you won't mind."

"It is delightful," said Mrs. Sedgwick, drawing her skirts very tight,

yet managing to keep her gaze upon the angle above the heap.

"Dear me!" said William. "How quick you are! I never saw that spider before."

"He has come to do the honors to us," said Dora. "How interesting a bachelor's room is."

"Very," assented Mrs. Sedgwick, as with a glance she unearthed the sleeve of William's coat. "Might I just touch that picture—now it is straight."

After a little while Dora's eye was caught by William's garden borders.

"How beautiful they are," she said. "There is no flower dresses so well as a wallflower. There is such a restrained sumptuousness in that red-brown velvet."

"Come and pick some," William answered.

"May I?" she said, blushing exquisitely.

He clapped on his college cap and led the way out.

"I *must*," remarked Mrs. Sedgwick, as soon as their backs were turned; "meddling or not, I simply must. And rising she swooped upon the mantelshelf. "Look here, Amy, crumbs and tobacco and all the plagues of Egypt."

"Not frogs?" inquired Amy.

"I don't know," answered Mrs. Sedgwick, scrubbing with an old glove and a paper-knife. "No, they like water; more likely pigs."

Meanwhile William and Dora attended to their branch of the business. It was a pleasant department, and its affairs were conducted in an old-fashioned, leisurely way.

"Are they not sweet?" said Dora, as she fastened some flowers in her pretty dress.

"Yes," said William, following the movements of her hands. "They are *now*."

"Now I should not wonder," Dora answered, "if that were a compliment."

Again her color came, and—really

there was no need; it was a becoming color—she stooped to hide it.

He, too, stooped, and, as she bent, her neck, with a little innocent frisk of hair curling over it—a little tendril lighter than all the rest, a shining straggler from the dark-brown, bronzy coils—lay right under Danby's eyes.

It was irresistible. At least he did not resist it.

"My darling," he said, as he steadied the tremulous curl with his lips.

Dora rose swiftly to her height. "Mr. Danby," she said, "there is nothing between us yet . . . and I don't think . . . at least I don't know. There are many things to think of first."

"Dora," he answered, "you are not mercenary, and you would not be afraid of a long engagement."

"It is not I," she said; "I am afraid of nothing. But—"

"Dora," he broke in, catching her hand, "you love me then; you do love me?"

"Oh, pray question me no more," she said. "My mother . . . you know her views about family and connections. . . . If you could . . . until . . . hark! Amy is calling us."

Indeed she was.

"Coming," cried Danby. "The stalks were dreadfully wiry. Now we have got enough."

William's mind was tossing among tumultuous thoughts. He knew that Dora loved him, and there was joy in that. He knew that without her mother's consent she would never be his—and there was dejection there. Would Mrs. Whitworth ever give her daughter to the son of the Widow Danby?

Plans shot through his brain like a shuttle. He must get his mother out of the way while the secret still held firm. He must invent a family history. He must marry Dora, and then . . . why, then let things take their chance. Was middle-class provincial pride to



put asunder two lives that God had joined together?

"I am afraid we must say good-bye," said Mrs. Sedgwick, as the truants re-entered the study.

"Without tea?" said Danby. "Non-sense; I'll hurry it up."

He stepped across to the kitchen. "Do be quick," he said; the ladies declare they must go."

"In one minute," answered his mother. Her back was towards him, but again he noticed that strangeness in her voice. She is not well," he thought, with no keenness of feeling, as he returned to his three lady guests.

"Bachelor's tea," he said, "does not come quite so naturally as blue to skies and rose to ladies' cheeks. Hal-loa! who's been deranging my tea-table? That's the harmonium, don't you know?"

He turned to put away some music that had been laid upon the top of the instrument, and at that moment his mother entered.

"Set it here, please," he said, and turned to face Mrs. Danby.

Ah, what was wrong? The tray clattered like some mock orchestra of children; yes, and the steps of the bearer swayed and her face . . . Oh! her face. It was flushed—inflamed—and the eyes were bloodshot and steeped in a kind of haze.

"She is very ill," Danby thought, as he rose to take the wavering tray from his mother's hands. And then he felt something strange in the gaze of the visitors—the gaze that converged upon the advancing face.

And then a sickly waft passed through the room, and William understood.

At that instant the tray fell with a crash, and Mrs. Danby staggered against the table.

"Shocking," said Mrs. Sedgwick, gathering back her skirts from the be-

laboring shower. "The woman is drunk."

Mrs. Danby put her hands across her face, then she let them drop, and looked at William.

Not a word did she utter, and yet the whole story was told. Through that swift telegraphy whereby hearts of one kin may, in great moments, touch, William received the truth.

Yes, his mother was drunk, and he had driven her to it. His shame of her had eaten into her soul. Abstinent all her life, unseduced, even untempted through the long years wherein her husband tried to drag her down, and even sober neighbors urged her to drink and forget, she had given way at last.

If he had beaten her she would not have minded. A woman can put up with that. But there was one thing that she could not bear, and that was the thing that had come. Her son was ashamed of her. She was his house-keeper, not his mother.

Either the woman's eyes or something sadder and more divine said all this to the young man in one mere point of time.

After that glance Mrs. Danby's head sank forward, and she sobbed aloud. Alas! her very sobs were drunken.

"Mr. Danby," said Mrs. Sedgwick, rising to go, "why do you keep such a woman?"

William stepped forward and put his arm round the swaying form that rested precariously against the table.

"Why do I keep her?" he asked. "I'll tell you if you want to know. Because she is my mother."

There was a start and a rustle, but nobody spoke.

"If," William went on, "you want to see the meanest cur in Christendom, look at me. I drove her to this—my mother as sober a woman as God ever made—with my cursed cowardice and vulgarity." Then, laying his head against the old woman's, he cried aloud,

"Oh, mother, mother, don't let your heart break till I have had time to atone."

"Whist, Willie, whist," she answered; "you didn't know . . . you didn't know."

*The Leisure Hour.*

Then Dora Whitworth stepped across the room and kissed the woman's face.

"Dear Mrs. Danby!" she said—"dear mother!"

*Frederick Langbridge.*

## PASSION AND IMAGINATION IN POETRY.

The unsatisfactoriness of definitions of poetry arises usually from one or other of two causes. If the definition is that of a critic, it is the resultant of a long analytical process, and therefore not very intelligible apart from the process by which it has been arrived at; if it is the definition of a poet, it is certain to contain that element of poetry which it professes to explain. Nevertheless, the most helpful *aperçus* into poetry are those which the poets themselves have given us, and of them all none is more helpful than that inspired parenthesis in which Milton one day summed up its characteristics as "simple, sensuous and passionate."

We may presume that by his first epithet Milton intended that simplicity which is another name for sincerity. He meant that a poet must look at the world frankly and with open eyes; with the spirit, though with more than the wisdom, of a child. We sometimes express another side of the same truth by saying that poetry is "universal," meaning that it cares nothing for superficial and transient fashions, but is interested only "in man, in nature, and in human life," in their permanent

elements. This first epithet seems to fix beyond dispute an indispensable quality of all poetry. If a writer is insincere, or if he is conventional and fashionable, we are sure, whatever his airs and graces, that he is no poet. By "sensuous" it is probable that Milton meant what, in more technical language, we should describe as "concrete." Poetry deals with things, and it deals with people; it sings of birds and flowers and stars; it sings of the wrath of Achilles, the wanderings of Ulysses and Æneas, the woes of King Ædipus, the problems of Brutus and Hamlet; whatever be the thought or the emotion it is concerned with, it is concerned with them as operating on a particular occasion; it has no concern with the intellect or the emotions or the will in abstraction from this or that wise or passionate or wilful person.<sup>1</sup> By his third epithet Milton, as most will agree, touched, or almost touched, the heart of the matter. We all conceive prose to be an adequate vehicle for our level feelings, but as soon as we are deeply moved and wish to express our emotion we instinctively turn to the poets.

<sup>1</sup> The tradition of this concreteness was not lost even in the eighteenth century. Poets, living in a time of abstract thought, and feeling under the necessity of handling abstractions which they mistook for universals, hit upon the device of personifying them, with the result that from the pages of Dodsley's *Miscellany* every faculty of the mind and every operation

of every science looks out at one with a capital letter, a fashion happily parodied in the famous line:

"Inoculation, heavenly maid, descend."

Gray is not untouched with the malady, though, on the whole, he represents a reaction back to the richness of the concrete, the "pomp and prodigality" of Shakespeare and Milton.

Wordsworth is at one with Milton in fixing upon passion as of the essence of poetry, which he in one place defines as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." It does not matter for poetry what the emotion is that overflows; it may be love or hate, pity or fear, awe or indignation, joy or sorrow; what matters for poetry is that some passion there should be, for some particular object, and that it should be sincerely and deeply felt.

Essential, however, as passion is, so that where there is no passion, there can be no poetry, in saying passion we have not said the last word. Any one may prove this to himself by a simple reminiscence. He may at some time have been in love, for, according to Patmore, "Love wakes men once a lifetime each;" and, perhaps, in a mood of exaltation he may have taken pen and paper for a sonnet to his mistress' eyebrow; but the poetry did not come; or, if something came, in a calmer mood he recognized that it was not poetry. Or we may illustrate from other passions. At the Queen's Jubilee a few years since we were all passionately loyal, and the morning newspapers vied with each other in producing odes; but no one could mistake any one of them for poetry. Or, the other day, again, when the Rennes verdict was announced, the intelligence of England was roused to a passion of indignation. I took up my weekly gazette the next Saturday morning and found that indignation had made a good many verses, in none of which was there a tincture of poetry. There was much cursing and swearing, and appealing to Heaven for vengeance; but the point of view was merely that of the man in the street.

These simple examples will suffice to show that poetry requires a manner of viewing things which is not that of the average man, but is individual

to the poet; it requires, in a word, genius. One could hardly expect Milton to point this out; having genius himself he would assume that every one else had genius; he would assume that we all had the power of looking at the world not only *frankly* but *freshly*, because he would not understand any other way of looking at it. Now, it is this fresh outlook and insight, this power of viewing things and people out of the associations in which the rest of mankind habitually view them, that is the root of the whole matter. In the world of nature we find the poets moved even to passion by objects that we hardly notice, or from long familiarity have come to ignore. Their strong emotion arises from their fresh vision. By means of that fresh vision the world never ceases to be an interesting place to them.

By the murmur of a spring,  
Or the least bough's rustling,  
By a daisy whose leaves spread  
Shut when Titan goes to bed,  
Or a shady bush or tree,  
She could more infuse in me  
Than all Nature's beauties can  
In some other wiser man.

So sang Wither of the Poetic Muse;  
and Blake expresses the same truth  
in his inspired doggerel:

What to others a trifle appears  
Fills me full of smiles and tears.

The converse of the proposition also holds true: what to others may appear facts of the highest importance, may to the poet appear trifles. Similarly in the world of men we find the poets as much interested in the least as in the greatest, and we find them unconcerned by many of the distinctions which to mankind in general appear vital. We find, for example, Andrew Marvell introducing into his panegyric

of Oliver Protector a picture of King Charles at his execution, which embalms the secret of all the cavalier loyalty, and is to-day the oftenest quoted passage of his poem.

The poet's subjects, then, are borrowed from any quarter in the whole range of nature and human experience; "the world is all before him where to choose;" anything that excites any deep emotion in him is a fit topic for his verse, and it is our privilege for the moment, so far as that one experience is concerned, to look through his eyes. In this way the poets interpret the world to us. They also interpret us to ourselves. They make adventurous voyages into hitherto unsounded seas of the human spirit, and bring us word of their discoveries. And what they thus win becomes an inalienable possession to the race; the boundaries of humanity are pushed back. This power of interpreting the world and human life is sometimes spoken of as an idealizing faculty, and no exception can be taken to the term so long as it is not explained to mean that the poet tricks up what he sees in false lights in order to please us. For any one who considers the best poetry, whether about the universe or man's heart,—and it is only the best that must determine the genus—will admit that, so far as he has trusted himself to it, it has convinced him of its entire veracity. It is idealized only in the sense that a landscape is idealized by the removal of the accidental and commonplace details, which sufficed to blind others to the beauty that the painter distinguished. The artist, poet or painter, sees the light that never was on sea or land until he saw it; but when he has once seen it and shown it us, we can all see that it is there, and is not merely a figment of his fancy. This mode of viewing things, which by its freshness reveals,

or interprets, or idealizes, is what is meant by Poetical Imagination.

But now that that most terrifying of technical terms has been mentioned, it may be well to make a short summary of the various senses in which the word is habitually employed, in order to observe what all, or any, of them have in common, and how they connect one with another.

(a.) When a psychologist speaks of imagination he is not thinking of poetry; he means by the word the power of summoning again before the mind's eye vivid images of what has been once seen. He bids us look carefully at our breakfast-table, and then, closing our eyes, notice how much of it we can recall, how clear or dim an image. Whether skill in this memory-picturing has any link with poetical imagination it would be hard to say; certainly to no one would a power of vividly recalling images be of greater service. The faculty seems to be entirely distinct from the power of attention and close observation.

(b.) A more familiar usage of the word is that which makes it almost a synonym for sympathy—the power of projecting self into the circumstances of others. We know to our cost that many men and women are sadly to seek in this faculty, and it seems to be no especial prerogative of poets, though Shelley thought so. He speaks of the poet as—

A nerve o'er which do creep  
The else unfelt oppressions of the  
earth.

And in his prose essay he says: "A man to be greatly good must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another, and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own;" and he continues, "The great instrument of moral good

is imagination, and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause." (*Essays*, I, 16.)

Shelley in this passage is no doubt theorizing too much from his own personal feelings; for it has often been remarked that poets have been singularly lacking in imagination of this moral sort, and have been conspicuous for an intense selfishness in their domestic relations.

(c.) But the word is also used not of moral, but of intellectual sympathy; a power of appreciating, by an act of intuition, the characteristic qualities of things and people, so as to be able to set out a train of consequences. A celebrated novelist was once congratulated upon the admirable drawing in one of her books of a particular school of Dissenters, and she was asked what opportunities she had enjoyed of studying them. Her reply was that she had once caught sight of a group of them through a half-opened door as she mounted a staircase. That is no doubt an extreme case, but it is all the more useful as an illustration. It helps us to realize how potent a faculty is the endowment of the dramatist, which can pierce through human appearance to its essential qualities, can conceive by a sure instinct how, in given circumstances, the given character must act, and can represent it to us, because it is vivid to him, in all the verisimilitude of essential detail. Such imagination is plainly one large and special side of the faculty of seeing things out of their commonplace associations. As a branch of the same head would rank the still rarer power of conceiving types of character, that for certain reasons have no actual existence in the world we know, such types as Shakespeare's Ariel and Caliban and Puck.

(d.) The word imagination is also used of a faculty which may at first

sight seem the opposite of this—a faculty of seeing people and objects not as they are in themselves, but colored by the atmosphere of joy or gloom through which they are seen. The truth, however, probably is that nothing at all is, or ever can be, seen out of some atmosphere, a thing in itself being merely an abstraction; but the greater a poet is, the more various are his moods, while with lesser men a particular mood may cover all the objects in their poetical world.

(e.) Again, the word has a narrower and more technical sense; namely, the power of detecting resemblances in nature for the purpose of poetical illustration. This use of the term is not merely freakish, but connects with that broader and more fundamental sense to which I have so many times referred, the power and habit of seeing the "common things that round us lie" out of their commonplace associations, of seeing them in more subtle and original associations. For it is the power of bringing together two objects or events that the ordinary person would never dream of connecting, but in which the poet's eye has detected similarity, and which he therefore places side by side so that one may throw light upon the other. Our thinking, it will be admitted, is largely associational; one thing recalls another; but it is the prerogative of poets that the tracks between idea and idea in their minds are not those of common trade. Recur for a moment to Wither's reference to a daisy. We know beforehand what a daisy will suggest to a child, what to a gardener, what to a botanist; we do not know beforehand what it will suggest to a poet. It may be, as it was to Chaucer, a crowned queen:—

A fret of gold she haddē next her hair,  
And upon that a white crown she  
bare

With flourouns smallë, and (I shall not lie)

For all the world right as a daisy  
Ycrowned is with whitë leaves light,  
So were the flourouns of her corown white.

How utterly different from this is the feeling of Burns! To him the daisy is the type of humble cheerfulness, sweet neighbor and meet companion of the humble and cheerful lark. How different, again, was that feeling it inspired in Wordsworth! The point to strike home to him was the touch of kinship between the simplest flower and man in the fact that both are alive:

Sweet silent creature  
That *breathest* with me in sun and air.

Imagination, used in this restricted sense of the interpretation of phenomena by comparison, is often contrasted with a weaker form of itself to which the name of Fancy is given. The distinction was introduced into these islands by Coleridge, who endeavored to teach it to Wordsworth; it was then popularized by Leigh Hunt and afterwards by Ruskin. It has played in the last half century so prominent a part in the criticism of poetry, that it is perhaps worth while to look it for once fairly in the face. Coleridge was always promising to give a disquisition upon Poetical Imagination, but he never kept his word; he did, however, what was almost better; in the "Biographia Literaria" he illustrated his meaning from some passages in his friend's poems; and we gather from his comments that he did

not at all mean Imagination to be distinguished from Fancy as the perception of deeper from that or more superficial resemblances; he wished the term Fancy to be kept for the use of poetical imagery of all kinds, and the term Imagination to be used of the poet's faculty as a creative artist. He speaks of it as a unifying power, bringing together whatever will help his purpose, and rejecting all that is impertinent and unessential. He speaks of it also as a vivifying power, turning "bodies to spirits by sublimation strange." That is to say he uses Imagination not so much of a quality of the poet's mind as of an artistic power which he exercises, the power of imposing living form upon dead matter,— he calls it in the "Ode to Dejection;"—"my *shaping* spirit of imagination;"—but it is not hard to see that this unifying and vitalizing power depends upon what is the characteristic essence of imagination, the unanalyzable power of seeing things freshly and in new and harmonious associations. The idea must precede the execution, and it is a small matter whether the term Imagination be employed of the idea or the embodiment. Between Imagination and Fancy, therefore, as Coleridge conceived them, there could be no confusion.

The trouble began with Wordsworth. By Imagination, as by Fancy, Wordsworth practically means the use of poetical imagery; but he ascribes to the higher faculty the images which occur to the poet, not in his superficial moods, but under the influence of deeper emotion.<sup>3</sup> Leigh Hunt preserved and illustrated this

<sup>3</sup> Characteristically Wordsworth, in his celebrated preface, illustrated what he meant by imagination, not from his friend's poetry, but his own. Upon the line "Over his own sweet voice the stock-dove broods," he thus comments: "The stock-dove is said to coo, a sound well imitating the note of the bird; but by the intervention of the metaphor broods, the affec-

tions are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the bird reiterates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participatory of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous process of incubation."



distinction from a wide range of poets. Mr. Ruskin, in the second volume of "Modern Painters" (p. 163), turned aside from an elaborate disquisition upon Imagination in painting to speak of poetry. "The Fancy," he says, "sees the outside, and so is able to give a portrait of the outside, clear, brilliant, and full of detail; the Imagination sees the heart and inner nature, and makes them felt, but it is often obscure, mysterious, and interrupted in its giving of outer detail. And then follows a remarkable parallel between the flower passage in "Lycidas" and that in the "Winter's Tale," greatly to the disadvantage of the former.

It will be remembered that the passage from "Lycidas" is printed with marginal notes, as follows:—

Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,	<i>Imagination.</i>
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,	<i>Nugatory.</i>
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,	<i>Fancy.</i>
The glowing violet,	<i>Imagination.</i>
The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,	<i>Fancy and vulgar.</i>
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,	<i>Imagination.</i>
And every flower that sad embroidery wears.	<i>Mixed.</i>

Then follows the passage from the "Winter's Tale":—

O Proserpina,  
For the flowers now, that, frightened,  
thou let'st fall  
From Dis's wagon! daffodils,  
That come before the swallow dares,  
and take  
The winds of March with beauty;  
violets, dim,  
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's  
eyes,  
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,  
That die unmarried, ere they can behold  
Bright Phoebus in his strength, a  
malady  
Most incident to maids.

And then comes this criticism:

Observe how the imagination in these last lines goes into the very inmost soul of every flower, after having touched them all at first with that heavenly timidity, the shadow of Proserpine's, and gilded them with celestial gathering, and never stops on their spots or their bodily shape; while Milton sticks in the stains upon them and puts us off with that unhappy freak of jet in the very flower that, without this bit of paper-staining, would have been the most precious to us of all. "There is pansies, that's for thoughts."

I do not know whether this comparison has ever been the subject of adverse comment: I have often heard it praised. To me, I confess it seems a compendium of all the faults that a critic of poetry should avoid: waywardness, preciosity, inattention, and the uncritical use of critical labels. In the first place the critic has ignored what is of the first consequence, the motive of the two pieces, and has treated them as parallel flower-passages from a volume of elegant extracts; whereas no criticism can be to the point that does not recognize that Milton's flowers are being gathered for a funeral, and Shakespeare's are not to be gathered at all; they are visionary spring flowers, seen in glory through the autumn haze. Without going at length through each passage it is worth noticing that Shakespeare's lines about the primrose are open to precisely the same censure, no more and no less, as Mr. Ruskin accords to Milton's pansy. The epithet "pale" is very far from "going into the very inmost soul" of the primrose, which is a hardy flower, and not in the least anæmic; it "sticks in the stains" upon the surface as much as the "freaked with jet;" and this, again, so far from being "unhappy," gives the reason why the pansy was chosen for

the hearse among the flowers that "sad embroidery wear." A second point to notice concerns the lines that are marked "nugatory." Both Shakespeare and Milton had the instinct to see that just as, on the one hand, a flower passage must not be a mere catalogue, so, on the other, each item must not be unduly emphasized. And so we find that, while Milton has his "tufted crow-toe and pale jessamine," and his "well-attir'd woodbine" to make up the bunch, Shakespeare also has his

Bold oxlips, and  
The crown-imperial, lillies of all kinds,  
The flower-de-luce being one!

a "nugatory" passage which Mr. Ruskin omits from his quotation. So much, then, for the contrast of Imagination and Fancy.

In resuming what has been said about the two great characteristics of the poetical mind, its passion and its imagination, it may be useful to illustrate from the picture that our great dramatist has drawn of the poetical character in the person of Macbeth. Macbeth, indeed, was a poet without a conscience; but that circumstance is to the advantage of our illustration, since we shall not be able to confuse his morality with his poetry. There are several points that may be noticed.

1. First, though on this much stress must not be laid, we observe Macbeth's power of summoning up, and vividly objectifying impressions of sense. He sees an air-drawn dagger. He hears a voice say, "Sleep no more."

2. Secondly, and this is fundamental, we remark the passionate intensity with which he realizes whatever comes before him, his own states of mind, or events that happen, and sees them in all their attendant circumstances and consequences. No fact that at all interests him remains a barren

fact to him, and most facts do interest him. When he is contemplating the death of Duncan he appreciates thoroughly and entirely all that is involved in that death:—

He's here in double trust:  
First, as I am his kinsman, and his  
subject,  
Strong both against the deed; then, as  
his host,  
Who should against his murderer shut  
the door,  
Not bear the knife myself. Besides,  
this Duncan  
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath  
been  
So clear in his great office, that his  
virtues  
Will plead like angels, trumpet-  
tongued, against  
The deep damnation of his taking-off.

So he goes from point to point, realizing as he goes. Even more striking is the way in which he is moved after the murder by Duncan's untroubled condition, thoroughly appreciating it:—

Duncan is in his grave;  
After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well;  
Treason has done his worst; nor steel,  
nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,  
Can touch him further!

Or consider the passage, at the end of the play, where he is contemplating his own deserted state:—

I have liv'd long enough; my way of  
life  
Is fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf;  
And that which should accompany old  
age,  
As honor, love, obedience, troops of  
friends,  
I must not look to have; but, in their  
stead,  
Curses, not loud, but deep, mouth-  
honor, breath,  
Which the poor heart would fain deny,  
but dare not.

Especially characteristic here of the poet seems to me the pause on the idea of curses, to realize them, before going further, "curses, not loud, but deep."

3. In the third place, we remark that, as Macbeth realizes with such vividness and such emotion the qualities of everything that appeals to him, so one thing is always suggesting another with similar qualities:—

Then comes my fit again; I had else  
been perfect;  
Whole as the *marble*, founded as the  
*rock*,  
As broad and general as the casing *air*;  
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd.

When the ghostly voice that he hears, the echo of his own imaginative mind, suggests to him the terrible thought that he has murdered not the king only, but Sleep, the greatest friend of man, he is at once absorbed in the thought of all the wonder and mystery of sleep, which he draws out into a long string of images; forgetting all about the business he had been engaged in, and the bloody daggers in his hand, until his practical wife in blank amazement breaks in with, "What do you mean?" No one, again, is likely to forget the desolate images under which he sums up his idea of the worthlessness and meaninglessness of human life:

Life's but a walking shadow; a poor  
player,  
That struts and frets his hour upon the  
stage,  
And then is seen no more; it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and  
fury,  
Signifying nothing.

4. I would point out, further, as a frequent trait of the poetic nature, Macbeth's simplicity; shown partly by his interest in his own moods; for ex-

ample, in such sayings as "False face must hide what the false heart doth know;" more curiously in his speculation why he could not say "Amen" when the groom he was about to murder said, "God bless us;" most curiously in his irritation at ghost-walking:—

The times have been  
That, when the brains were out, the  
man would die,  
And there an end; but now they rise  
again,  
With twenty mortal murders on their  
crowns,  
And push us from our stools; this is  
more strange  
Than such a murder is.

5. Finally, though in this I am trespassing on a subject which I hope to discuss in a second paper, we cannot but observe Macbeth's extraordinary talent for expression. I will give but one instance. Shakespeare, whether by design or chance, has reserved for him, perhaps, the most remarkable presentment in literature of the phenomenon of falling night—

Light thickens,

an expression which gives not only the fact of growing darkness, but also its qualities.

The picture of the poetical nature that Shakespeare has given us in Macbeth is considerably heightened if by the side of it we add for contrast his Richard II. Without working out the parallel in any detail, it will be enough to call attention to two points. In the first place, Richard has no imagination in the sense which we have seen reason to give to that term; he has no intuition into the scope and meaning and consequences of events. Compare, for instance, with Macbeth's picture of old age, Richard's picture of a dethroned king:—

I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,  
 My gorgeous palace for a hermitage;  
 My gay apparel for an almsman's  
 gown;  
 My figured goblets for a dish of wood;  
 My sceptre for a farmer's walking  
 staff,  
 My subjects for a pair of carved  
 saints;  
 And my large kingdom for a little  
 grave, &c.

The points in the picture which rouse Richard's emotion, and which he sets out before us, are all merely superficial; never once does he touch the real heart of the matter. The other noticeable thing is that Richard is much less interested in persons or events than in his feelings about them, and then only in such as are lamentable; and perhaps, it would be true to add, less in the lamentable feelings than in the pathetic language in which they can be expressed. He "hammers out" a simile as though it

*The National Review.*

was an end in itself, and is moved by a curious phrase so as almost to forget his troubles. In the coronation scene, after Richard has cast down the looking-glass with the words,—

How soon my sorrow hath destroyed  
 my face,

Bolingbroke, with all a practical man's contempt of play-acting and rhetoric, satirically replies:—

The shadow of your sorrow hath destroyed  
 The shadow of your face,

whereupon Richard is at once arrested:—

Say that again!  
 The shadow of my sorrow! ha! let's see!

Could there be a truer portrait of the "minor poet" or sentimentalist?

*H. C. Beeching.*

### IN MEMORIAM.

CATHARINE GLADSTONE, June 14th, 1900.

Go, faithful heart; be his again once more!  
 How brief the space of parting! Oh, be free,  
 Be glad again, where on the further shore  
 He waits to welcome thee.

Mind conquers mind, and wit, a subtle spark,  
 Grows dim, and eloquence is soon forgot,  
 And warriors die, and moulder in the dark,  
 And men remember not.

Thou hadst no thought for greatness; it was fame  
 Enough for thee if one was reckoned great;  
 Enough to keep from fiery shafts of blame  
 One head inviolate.

God gave thee love whole-hearted, love to thrill  
 The colder, harder world that girt thee round,  
 A silent speeding ripple, widening still  
 To life's extremest bound.

*The Spectator.*

*Arthur C. Benson.*

# THE STUDY OF PLANT LIFE.

The Alps! Amongst fairly well-to-do English men and women, are there any whose hearts do not beat a little faster at the word, either in memory of happy days of long ago or anticipation of such to come? The early start, the toil and vicissitudes of the day, the cozy inn, the well-dressed dinner to meet a raging appetite, the social evening, and then those crisp, clean sheets, altogether make it just a luxury to live and move and feel. It is a glorious thing to conquer the Jungfrau, to look down from the summit of Mount Blanc on a subject world of snow and ice and crevasses. These are amongst the things that brace the nerves, harden the sinews, and make the Anglo-Saxons who delight in them a dominant race.

But it is only to the few that this high privilege is given. The vast majority of men, and still more of women, must perforce content themselves with humbler joys, with less boastful conquests. And yet I know not but that the memory of a week at Zermatt, of the like at Mürren, or, to travel south, at Monte Generoso, may not have sweeter memories for these than for the conquerors of peaks. To this end, however, it is essential that they should have some pursuit which will replace the use of the ice-axe; nor have we much difficulty in determining what this should be for the majority of educated people. Next to its glorious peaks and snowfields, the great beauty of the Alpine chain is its flowers. No one who has once seen a field of *Gentiana verna* in the Engadine in June, or of *Primula farinosa* in the lowlands about the same time, can ever forget them. To me the memory will ever be green of my first introduction to *Androsace carnea*. It was high up, with little visible all round but snow. A

projecting rock cropped out of the snow; in a hollow a little soil had accumulated, and this was cushioned with this lovely plant.

Saussure studied geology in the Alps with a purpose, and other men of science have left behind them far-reaching results from researches in the same beautiful mountains; but studies of this kind need a long and laborious previous training. There is, perhaps, nothing that will enable ordinary people, who have neither time nor inclination for deep study, to taste a few drops of the sweets of science with such pleasant accompaniments, as an intelligent study of botany.

The adjective is intentional, and should be emphasized; for there is a large class of persons, chiefly young ladies, who go abroad furnished, at best, with "Wood's Tourist Flora," and a dictionary of botanical terms. Their brothers bring them in large handfuls of flowers from their walks, and they spend laborious evenings identifying these; but to some it never seems to occur that it is worth inquiring as to the function of the stamens which they count so conscientiously; why the blossom of one flower is of gorgeous hue while another is insignificant; why some emit their scent by day and others by night; why one droops its head and another holds it erect; why one is bare in the throat and others covered with hairs; or why in some species these hairs point upwards and in others downwards;—with a hundred similar questions. Nor is it only in the study of botany that such knowledge comes in usefully. How pleasant it must be to the geologist when he comes across a fragment of what once was wood, but, probably millions of years ago, was converted into flint, to be able to tell

at a glance whether the tree of which it was a part belonged to the endogenous or the exogenous order of plants; to that family of which the palms are now the most noted examples, or that to which most of our forest trees belong; and how much such a knowledge may suggest of the natural history of the country at the time, of its climate, its fertility, its fauna!

I humbly apologize! I am afraid that I may be misunderstood as speaking disrespectfully of the young ladies aforesaid. Nothing could be further from my thoughts or intentions. I have spent too many delightful evenings in assisting such investigations with the microscope to speak lightly of them. The object of this paper is, not to discourage botany of this kind, but to suggest to those who practice it how much more delightful their study would be if they would pursue it a little deeper.

Few things could conduce more to this than a previous study of Kerner's most interesting work on "The Natural History of Plants," admirably translated by F. W. Oliver, profusely illustrated (a great help to the beginner), and published in four half volumes, comprising about 1,800 pages. When we learn from him how it is that the instant the snow has melted from a spot, there the *Soldanella* is found in full bloom we shall look upon its graceful, fringed bells with a quickened interest.

If you ask a class of children what is the essential difference between themselves, as representatives of the animal kingdom, and a cabbage, as representing the vegetable kingdom, you will (at least if the children are Irish, as all my little neighbors are) receive a number of answers more or less intelligent. You will be told that one is alive and the other not; that one can feel, see, hear, taste, smell, and the other not; that one is

capable of locomotion and the other fixed to the soil; or if it be a higher class in a board school, you will probably hear something about exhaling respectively carbonic acid gas and oxygen, or about consuming organic and inorganic matter as food; and yet one and all of these characteristics can be shown to belong to some species only, not to all.

The truth is that there is no clearly defined division between the animal and vegetable kingdoms. It is often difficult, if not impossible, to declare of some that are just on the borderland to which kingdom they belong. The most up-to-date definition is that about food attributed above to the objectionably precocious infant at the head of a board school; and yet how far it is from being a true definition will be seen from the following examples.

To begin with ourselves. We and many other animals make salt, a pure mineral, a constant article of food, while not a few plants are as truly carnivorous as a tiger, catching their prey, converting their structure for the time being into a stomach, and digesting the nutritious parts just as we do our dinner. Our bogs and mountains are studded with the attractive little sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia* and *longifolia*). From a loose rosette of battledore-shaped leaves rises the panicle of somewhat inconspicuous flowers. The leaves are thickly sprinkled with bright red tentacles, each crowned with a tiny drop of sticky mucilage, which glitters in the sun and gives the plant its name. But woe to the fly that is attracted by its beauty! Once let him light upon it and there is no escape, the mucilage holds him fast. There is a story somewhere of an Englishman who won a large sum at a gambling house in Paris. Unwilling to walk the streets at night with so large a sum about him, he was persuaded to engage a room in a lodging-house next



door. Fortunately for him he was too excited to sleep, for in the still hours he suddenly became aware that the tester of the bed on which he was lying was slowly and silently descending to smother him. The feelings of the fly on the sundew must be somewhat similar to this. Equally slowly and silently the tentacles which cover the leaf fold themselves around him; and when they expand again there is nothing left of the fly but the wings and the skin, the rest having been assimilated by the leaf.

Another carnivorous plant is the bladderwort (*Utricularia*). It is an aquatic plant, wholly submerged with the exception of the blossom, and profusely furnished with small bladder-like appendages about the size of snipe-shot. The bladders are open, and the opening is fringed with hairs pointing inwards like the wires of a rat-trap. The small animal organisms, whose number and variety in a single drop of water when examined under the microscope, astonish one, can enter, but they cannot leave it. There and then they turn into vegetable.

Once only (it was in the Dauphiné Alps) have I seen the beautiful yellow flower of the bladderwort rising from the water. Having made out what it was, I tried to bring some home in a bottle, but failed. The failure was of small importance, for having thus identified it, I found it growing in abundance about four miles from my own house. I transferred some to a pond in the garden, where it thrives amazingly, but I have never seen it in blossom in this country.

In England, Scotland and Ireland, our botanist, if he is fortunate, may find the curious subterranean parasite, *Lathræa squamaria*, whose English name of toothwort is derived from the ivory-white scales or leaves which cover the underground stem, and which are each a somewhat similar trap for

minute insects that make their way through the loosened earth. Thus in air, earth and water, vegetables have set their traps to turn the tables on the animal world, by catching and devouring many of its members.

We all know the evils of what is called "breeding in and in," and so do plants. To secure cross-fertilization their greatest ingenuity and most strenuous efforts are directed. I shall show presently how plants enlist the services of birds in the distribution of their seed, but for the purpose of cross-fertilization their chief servitors are winged insects, especially bees and moths. It is to attract these that they surround their pollen-bearing stamens with petals of every hue, which add such a charm to life. It is as a bait for them that the drop of honey is distilled at the base of each flower. It is for the night-flying moths that certain flowers reserve their scent till the sun is down; and it may be noted that these are generally devoid of bright colors. Such would be useless to them in the dark, and they scorn waste.

It has been said that if there were no cats, there could be no clover. The connection is not, at first sight, obvious, but it is this; clover is wholly dependent for fertilization on the humble-bee; field-mice are especially partial to bee-bread and the grub of the humble-bee; if it were not for the cats the field-mice would exterminate the bees, and the clover would perish. It is ingenious, but the author of it forgot the unjustly persecuted owl, who does more service to the farmer in keeping down the mice than all the pussy-cats in the place.

More pages than the editor would allow me would be needed to describe all the "dodges" (I can call them nothing else) that plants are up to to secure a cross-fertilization. I can but just mention a few. It is with this view that some plants are protogynous—that is

to say, it is not till the pistil has been fertilized by pollen from another plant that the stamens ripen their pollen, to be carried in turn to later flowers. A notable instance of this is the *Aristolochia clematitis*, a plant with an insignificant-looking tubular flower of about an inch long. At the bottom of the tube there is a globular chamber which contains the honey. The tube inside is covered with fine hairs, all pointing downwards. Thus small flies can enter, and, if they have previously been in other flowers, the pistil receives from them the pollen that is needed. Once in, the fly cannot escape at pleasure. He must stay there till the pistil is withered, and the stamens have, in their turn, ripened, and deposited their pollen in the chamber where the fly is. Then the imprisoning hairs wither up, probably the supply of honey ceases, and the fly, thoroughly coated with pollen, is free to depart. Liberty is sweet, but to his taste honey is sweeter still. He seeks another flower where the scent of honey is strong, and so the process is repeated till the supply of blossoms ceases.

In a previous number of this magazine, I have mentioned the sensitive nature of the stamens of the barberry, and how, when touched near the base by a honey-seeking insect, they spring forward, one by one, to cover him with their pollen, and so compel him to convey it to the next flower that he may visit. Another pretty experiment displays a mechanical arrangement with the same object. When at rest the stamens of the salvia with their anthers lie hidden within the hood, where they are protected from wet. If, however, our experimenting botanist will take a blunt-pointed pin, and holding it at about the length of a bee's trunk from the end, insert it in the tube, he will find that it there encounters the short arm of a lever, the long arm of which is the anther-bearing end of the stamen.

In its descent the pin (or trunk of the bee) pushes back this lever, thus causing the anthers to emerge from the hood, and gently to touch the finger of the operator, which represents the back of the bee, depositing its pollen there. On the pin being withdrawn, they retire again within the hood, to await another visit.

Though insects are the chief agents of cross-fertilization, they are far from being the only ones. There are many plants—such, for instance, as the grasses, and, among trees, *coniferæ*—whose agent is the wind. They produce pollen in such abundance that a pistil can scarcely escape fertilization at the hands of the breeze. They do not need to attract the visits of insects, and consequently have neither honey, nor scent nor gorgeous flowers.

Some plants do not seem to be aware of the benefit to be derived from crossing, and have made all their arrangements for self-fertilization; while others are so resolved to discourage it that they will not admit the presence of the two sexes in the same flower; for instance, the hazel, the catkins of which contain stamens only, the female flowers being tiny red ones sessile on the twigs, that might easily escape attention. Others carry their table of affinity still further, enacting that no pistil shall be fertilized by pollen from the same tree. These have consequently male and female plants. An interesting example of this is the *Aucuba Japonica*. We have long had the female plant, which was easily propagated by cuttings, but bore no fruit. About a generation ago Japan was opened up, and some botanist brought home the male plant. Since then, our old friend, rejoicing in her recovered spouse, has brought forth abundantly, and, where he is near, is yearly covered with brilliant berries.

Not less notable are the habits of plants and their relations to animals in

the matter of the distribution of their seed. Some seeds, like those of the thistle, are furnished with a downy apparatus, which enables them to float upon the breeze. They can float thus for miles, seeking a new habitat. Others, like burs, are furnished with hooks, by which they attach themselves to any passing animal, sticking to him perhaps for days, but sure, eventually, to be dropped somewhere away from the parent plant. Others, again, explode their seed vessel with sufficient force to scatter their seed far and wide. Children, grown-up ones sometimes, are fond of touching the ripening pods of balsam, and trying not to be startled by the explosion which ensues.

Of all the arrangements for dispersing seed, there is, however, none at all to compare with the compact which plants have apparently made with the animal kingdom, and especially with birds. It would almost seem as if there was a formal treaty between the two kingdoms, the vegetable saying to the other, "We will produce seed in abundance, far more in a single year than the whole world would suffice to grow, and this shall be to you for food, you rendering to us in return this service, that you deposit in a favorable position for growth, and uninjured, one grain in every ten thousand." Let us see how the animals fulfil their part of the compact. A man picks an apple, and munches it as he goes along, throwing the core away, the core in which are the seeds, which are thus deposited yards, or perhaps miles, away from the parent tree.

Why, on a winter's day, do we see the rooks and the sparrows contending which shall have the first turn-over of the freshly-deposited horse-droppings? Why, but because a few grains of oats often pass undigested through the horse? And perhaps an odd grain may escape even their sharp eyes and

germinate, thus covered and manured. Other small animals, like the field-mice, make their subterranean store, some of which through casualties in their small army, escape and grow.

The birds, however, are the principal agents in the distribution of seed. Let us glance at a few instances of this. The branches of an oak and the ground underneath may be seen in acorn time thick with rooks gorging themselves with acorns. But what is yon glossy purple fellow doing apart from the others. He has flown into the middle of the field, where he can have a better eye upon approaching enemies, and is vigorously hammering away at the ground with his strong beak. Having eaten as many acorns as his craw will hold, he is burying a few with an eye to hard times. When those times come the "boy with the gun" may have got him, or he may fail to locate some of his buried treasures, which grow up, and in time prove their gratitude by repaying the acorn with compound interest to his descendants.

The blackbird is especially fond of the berries of the ivy. When he has filled his craw with them, he retires to his favorite tree, and, putting his head under his wing, sleeps the sleep of the just. In the morning the ground under his perch is white with his droppings; but if these be examined, it will be found that the actual seeds have been too hard for his gizzard, and have been deposited in the very spot most favorable for their success in the battle of life—at the foot of a tree. I must give one more example of this compact. In order that they may germinate, the seeds of the mistletoe must be smudged on to the branch of certain kinds of trees. With this view, the plant surrounds its seeds with a highly glutinous mucilage, which it flavors with a nicety to the taste of the thrush. In eating the berries the thrush can no more escape getting his beak covered outside

with this sticky mucilage than a child can indulge in a feast of bilberries with a clean mouth. His dinner ended, he goes, like a tidy child, to wipe his mouth; for this he finds the branch of a tree quite the handiest sort of napkin, but it is not the mucilage alone that he wipes off; an occasional seed has also stuck outside, and this, too he deposits on the branch together with the mucilage needed for its adhesion there, in the only position and under the only conditions suited to its growth, and which could not otherwise be easily attained.

It was a purely utilitarian idea that first drew me to a superficial study of botany. As a boy I had read, as all boys do greedily, the story of a shipwreck. The crew had, of course, been cast upon an uninhabited shore, where no food offered but strange plants that might have death hidden in their leaves. Now, amongst the officers was one who had some knowledge of botany, enough, at least, to make him aware that no crucifer is poisonous to the human subject. To him, also, the plants themselves were strange, but he caused all that were gathered to be brought to him; the cruciferæ he put in the pot, and the rest he rejected; and so he kept his crew alive till help came. The cruciferæ are so named from their petals forming a cross; but let none be misled into supposing that all cross-petaled flowers are, therefore, innocuous. Some are highly poisonous. A true crucifer must not only have four petals, but it must also have four divisions of the calyx; the stamens must also be examined and prove to be six in number, of which four are long and two short.

Only doctors fully understand how much an experimental and scientific study of plant life has tended to alleviate the ills from which we suffer in our persons and our properties. It was not till the microscope had laid bare

the fact that the dread potato disease was simply a fungus, that the means of treating it, which have now reduced its ravages to a comparatively insignificant amount, were discovered. What do we not owe to quinine? But without a chemical and experimental study of plant life we should never have known that it was to be found in the bark of certain trees.

A study of the natural orders of plants may, at first sight, appear unattractive, but it is full of interesting facts; witness that about the extensive order of cruciferæ mentioned above. I hate Greek names and never use such if there is an English equivalent; but English or Greek, surely it is deeply interesting to learn that, as a rule, all monocotyledons are endogenous, while dicotyledons are exogenous, so that when the first tender seed-leaves of a tree appear above ground, the botanist can tell, within limits, of what nature its timber will be. Even to the uninitiated, such names as *Coniferæ*, *Rosaceæ*, *Compositæ*, *Umbelliferae*, *Liliaceæ*, *Gramineæ*, or, amongst non-flowering plants, the Ferns, the Mosses, the Fungi, the Algæ, and the Lichens, convey at once certain well-defined characteristics which are a help in the general arrangement of such knowledge as one may happen to acquire. I once asked the members of a Y.M.C.A. if they could name any non-flowering plant. There was but one response; it was from the curate—"carrots"! And yet the species of cryptogamous, or non-flowering plants, far exceed in number those that bear flowers.

If there is one class of scientists to whose studies botany would appear alien, it is the mathematicians—and yet at p. 396 of the first volume of Kerner will be found some very curious facts, too long to quote here, as to the mathematical distribution of leaves on the stem.

What, I may be asked, is the use of

learning all this? Well, if the querist confines his definition of "use" to money-grubbing, even then the answer may be found above; but, if that word includes the attainment of happiness, it is of the highest use. Few things can more add to the happiness of travel, or even of a saunter round one's own garden, or a walk through town or coun-

*Longman's Magazine.*

try than some knowledge of the reason of things, some perception of how the great God has woven all His works together, making each dependent on the other, till the heart breaks out in its hallelujah, "O ye mountains and hills, O all ye green things upon the earth, bless ye the Lord; praise Him and magnify him forever."

*Thomas Cooke-Trench.*

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### THE SEA WRACK.

The wrack was dark and shiny where it floated in the sea,  
There was no one in the brown boat but only him and me;  
Him to cut the sea wrack, me to mind the boat,  
An' not a word between us the hours we were afloat.

The wet wrack,  
The sea wrack,  
The wrack was strong to cut.

We laid it on the gray rocks to wither in the sun,  
An' what should call my lad then, to sail from Cushendun?  
With a low moon, a full tide, a swell upon the deep,  
Him to sail the old boat, me to fall asleep.

The dry wrack,  
The sea wrack,  
The wrack was dead so soon.

There's a fire low upon the rocks to burn the wrack to kelp,  
There's a boat gone down upon the Moyle, an' sorra one to  
help!

Him beneath the salt sea, me upon the shore,  
By sunlight or moonlight we'll lift the wrack no more.

The dark wrack.  
The sea wrack,  
The wrack may drift ashore.

*Maira O'Neill.*

## MISS MARY KINGSLEY.

The loss that the nation has suffered by the death of Miss Mary Kingsley is much greater than is generally understood. People talk as if we had merely lost a striking, sympathetic and original personality, and a clear-eyed investigator of native customs and beliefs. In reality we have lost what is far more precious,—a woman capable of seeing essential facts and of understanding the political conditions existing in some of the obscurest and most difficult regions of the Empire. Remarkable from many and very different points of view, Mary Kingsley was, in our belief, most remarkable for her sane and statesmanlike views on African questions. She had already thrown a great deal of light upon the affairs of West Africa and the local administrative problems, and had she lived we doubt not that she would have made a real and most valuable contribution to our knowledge of the South African problem. Her strength lay in her ability to see through sham and humbug and "tall talk" of all kinds, and yet not become cynical or disillusioned. No one was less taken in than she by the cant of Jingoism, and yet she remained always a firm Imperialist, with an almost unbounded belief in the power of English-speaking men to take up Imperialist responsibilities and carry them through successfully. She was against hasty and ill-considered expansion and "rushes" of annexation, but she believed implicitly in the capacity of the race to govern subject peoples. But though she was always preaching caution and discretion in the march of Empire, it was impossible to frighten her as to the general ability of the nation to cope with its work. At a time when men are inclined to run into the extreme of Little Englandism on the

one hand, and to dread all Imperial responsibility, and on the other to plunge into a wild and fanatic Imperialism without reason and without method, she held an even balance, and brought a most valuable corrective. The same good sense and level-headedness were displayed in her views of the native question. While feeling a deep sympathy for all natives, and anxiously desiring their welfare, she was entirely free from any exaggerated notions as to the perfectibility of the negro, and did not in the least desire to favor schemes for treating black men as if they were white. In fact, her main contention was always that you must not try to raise the negroes by giving them votes and representative institutions and the like, but by studying them and finding out the form of government which suited them best. She desired, as far as possible, to keep the blacks and whites apart, each within their own polity. For example, the present writer remembers talking to her on the native question in South Africa, just before she left England, and asking her whether she thought it would be possible to maintain a system of native reserves on a very large scale, like Basutoland, where, under Imperial officers, the natives could live their own lives unmixed with the whites, but whence the young men could issue for work in the mines or on the farms or elsewhere. To such a solution of the problem she most strongly inclined, and instanced examples from the West Coast which supported such a plan. On the whole she trusted to an enlightened and just separation of the black community from the white for the protection of the natives, much more than to any plan of giving them votes or a legal status equal to that of the white man.



Put in its widest form, her plea in regard to the treatment of the native races was for justice and knowledge against emotionalism. She nowhere dealt better with this aspect of the question than in a most able and timely letter which she contributed to the *Spectator* of last January (January 13th, 1900), entitled by us "Miss Mary Kingsley on Efficiency and Empire." A part of this letter is so striking and so exactly representative of the working of her mind, that we need make no apology for quoting it at length:—

Our commercial expansion in the days of Elizabeth was marked by an intense love of knowledge of the minor details. If you turn back and read your *Dampier* or any of that school of Imperialism, you will find chronicled all manner of domestic details about the strange countries and peoples they came in contact with. Our colonial, or emigrant, expansion of the age of Victoria, either to the Americas or to Australia, has been marked by no such love of detailed knowledge; in its place there is emotionalism. The reason for this is obvious, but it has produced tiresome results. A back-wave of this emotionalism gave us the Indian Mutiny, but our Indian Empire, being a direct descendant of our older Imperialism, survived, and has returned to its earlier tradition. In other regions, however, emotionalism has had fuller play, and has been regarded as a substitute for detailed knowledge. I sincerely hope among the many good things this South African affair will surely give us, one will be the recognition that emotionalism is sitting at our council board in a place that should be occupied by knowledge. I beg you will not misunderstand me, and think that by emotionalism I mean either true religion or true human sympathy. That emotionalism I so deeply detest and distrust is windy-headed brag and self-satisfied ignorance. "I did not know," would have been no safe excuse to offer to Sir Francis Drake for a disastrous enterprise. This emotionalism

has not spread dangerously yet among us. It is the nearest thing an Englishman can have to hysterics, and his constitution is not naturally inclined to them, but when he has them they are no use to him. They cannot help him to spread abroad his power, his religion, his justice, or his commerce. Yet undoubtedly he has, of late years, chosen this emotionalism for his counsellor in place of his Elizabethan counsellor, detailed knowledge, and this emotionalism has poisoned many of his noblest enterprises, has cost him much blood and money and heartache, and it has, above all things in the way of harm, made him suffer that grievous delusion, "the end justifies the means." I sincerely hope, now that it has had a showy breakdown, he will depose it, and replace that counsellor who so greatly helped to give him world-power, and that will so greatly help him to both keep and expand it. The lesson detailed knowledge teaches is hard and dry. It says: Learn things as they are and keep your given word; let it cost you what it may, be just. Emotionalism says: Mean well, be merciful and generous; forgetting that mercy and generosity are only compromises made towards the attainment of justice, not in themselves justice, that perfect thing by which alone an Empire can endure and prosper, and which is attainable by honorable-minded Englishmen by knowledge of the facts of the case.

There is the epitome of Mary Kingsley's Imperial creed. It is a great plea for justice in the highest and widest sense. The late Mr. Pater somewhere defined justice as "a higher knowledge through love." That was the kind of justice Mary Kingsley wanted to see recognized as the foundation of our Empire, and that was why she asked always for facts and abhorred emotionalism, the bastard brother of love.

Before we leave the subject of Mary Kingsley and the debt the Empire owes to her, we must say a word as to the fascination of her personality. She

was, without doubt, one of the most attractive of human beings. Her almost pathetic shyness was enough to destroy all notion of egotism, or pride, or pompousness, or vanity, but not enough to make her unsympathetic; while an interest in all subjects worth being interested in which never flagged, and an unfailing sense of humor which was never hard or unkind, made Mary Kingsley a delightful companion. But Mary Kingsley had, beyond all this, an intellect which it is no exaggeration to say was of the first class, and she had also a wealth of adventurous experience which belongs to few men,

*The Spectator.*

and to no other woman, of this generation.

Of the more personal side of Mary Kingsley's loss, the present writer will not speak, except to say that those who had the happiness to call her friend knew that she was a friend in the true and not the conventional sense of the word. All that we care to deal with here is the loss suffered by the nation and the Empire, and that, as we have tried to show, is a great one. We can ill spare those who have width of mind as well as special knowledge in regard to our Imperial affairs, and, Mary Kingsley had both in the highest degree.

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## BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

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Stephen Crane left in manuscript a volume of short stories which may be called "Wounds in the Rain," and a long novel of adventure.

The Academy reports that the Holy Synod of Russia has issued a secret ukase excommunicating Count Tolstoy on account of his novel, "Resurrection."

Catharine II of Russia left five complete and six fragmentary plays, part of them in her own writing. They have been recently discovered, and are soon to be published.

Mr. George Moore's story of "Evelyn Innes" and his just completed "Sister Teresa" are actually parts of one long novel,—the longest novel, it is said, ever written about one character, for together the two books will contain 300,000 words. As soon as he has revised "Sister Teresa" Mr. Moore will

re-write "Evelyn Innes," and the two books will be published together, probably next spring.

The keynote to Mr. James Lane Allen's new novel, "The Increasing Purpose," is found, as many readers must have guessed, in the familiar line from "Locksley Hall"—

"Yet I doubt not through the ages  
one increasing purpose runs."

Two interesting contributions to the interpretation of Browning are promised for early publication; Mr. Arthur Waugh's monograph on Browning, and Mr. Stopford Brooke's Browning Lectures, which are to be published as a companion to his book on Tennyson.

The question, "Who Invented the Circulating Library?" is asked, but not very definitely answered by Mr. Archibald Clark, in the "Library." The first circulating library of which much is

known was established about 1740, by the Rev. Samuel Fancourt, in Crane-court, Fleet-Street, London.

The extensive library formed by the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel was sold last month at London. The collection was noteworthy for containing nearly all of the great county histories. It contained also a few early printed books of considerable rarity, and the most remarkable collection of political caricatures ever offered, arranged in eleven atlas folio volumes.

Brief, earnest and right to the point, the nearly three dozen sermons which make up the volume "David and His Friends" will be read by many with interest. The writer—or preacher—the Rev. Louis Albert Banks, originally made use of them as talks for a series of revival meetings, and they are admirably adapted to their purpose. The illustrations and anecdotes are well handled and forcible, besides covering a wide range of experiences, and the sincerity and manfulness of the sermons are evident. The character, life and times of David, and quotations from his writings, form the texts throughout the series. Funk & Wagnalls Co.

Just the book to slip into one's pocket as one starts off for an outing, laugh over one's self, and loan to one's fellow-travellers, is "Room Forty-Five," Mr. Howells's clever description of the havoc wrought in the summer hotel by the guest who snores. Mr. Howells's favorite heroine—inconsequent and insistent as ever—her long-suffering husband, the hotel clerk and the snorer are the actors in the little comedy. In its companion volume, "Bride Roses," the note of sadness is struck with a delicacy which reminds us how much Mr. Howells's reputation, like others, has suffered by the preference which

the public has shown for his lighter work. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Mr. Whitelaw Reid's discussion of "The Problems of Expansion," which The Century Company publishes, has a certain authority from the author's membership in the commission which negotiated the treaty of peace with Spain. The papers and addresses of which it is composed were written or spoken at various times during the past twenty months. Mr. Reid's initial point of view is indicated by the title of the first of these papers, published in September, 1898, "The Territory with which We are Threatened;" but he has been a consistent advocate from the first of the policy of retaining the whole of the Philippine archipelago, and he states his views and the reasons for them in this volume with virile force and persuasive logic.

It is an interesting coincidence that Miss Eliza R. Scidmore's important and diverting book, "China, the Long-lived Empire" should have been just ready for publication, when the break-up of the Empire began with the crisis precipitated by the demonstrations of the "Boxers." The book was not written for the occasion, but it precisely fits the occasion. Tientsin, Peking and other places, which have been lit up of late with the lurid light of a nameless horror, are here described as they appeared but recently to a bright and observant traveller, who saw them under peaceful conditions, when the first signs of unrest were manifesting themselves. Miss Scidmore is no chance traveller, for she has visited China frequently; and her sketches of Chinese life, character and politics, her portrait of the Dowager Empress, and her studies of social and political conditions make this the freshest, most picturesque and most vivid description of China and the Chinese that has been given us. The work is of absorbing in-

terest, from cover to cover. There are numerous illustrations. The Century Company.

A volume which will go far to increase North America's knowledge of South America is "The Columbian and Venezuelan Republics," by William L. Scruggs, who, in his capacity of minister plenipotentiary of the United States to those countries, has had unusual facilities for studying the places and the people. It is a book of travel, taking the reader on many entertaining jaunts, but it is also a study of political situations and present or future industrial conditions. Written in a direct and pleasing style, with an evident seriousness of purpose, a strong sense of justice, and, withal, an appreciation of the humorous, it is a wise and companionable book. Little, Brown & Co.

The "new theology," as a phrase for extreme conservatives to conjure with, may be robbed of its terrors by a calm reading of Walter Spence's "Back to Christ," published by A. C. McClurg & Co. It is a remarkably clear, simple and devout attempt to show that the supreme authority of the Christian church is to be found in the person of Christ, and to prove that "higher criticism" has not enfeebled the Christian faith, but has put new life into it by the use of a newer language. In the chapter on the nature of Atonement and on the Trinity, the book is eminently earnest and direct. While there are some people who will not reach Mr. Spence's conclusions, the book must be considered as adding greatly to the honest understanding which should prevail between the adherents of the "old" and the "new," and to readers not strongly attached to either division it will commend itself as an exceedingly satisfactory presentation of Christian thought and faith.

The sonorous title, "The Dread and Fear of Kings," which belongs to J. Breckenridge Ellis's story of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, is rightly applied, for the book gives a graphic picture of an age when no man's words or glances were his own. There are many well-drawn characters, among them the Greek Alexis, an architect, who is summoned to Rome to superintend the building of a secret passage for the Emperor, and finds himself in a perilous network of treacheries. The real hero is the freedman and poet, Phaedrus, and the two heroines are a spirited Roman maiden and a brave Jewess. A complication of love affairs, in which pleasure-loving Greek, fighting Roman and high-souled Thracian are all involved, gives an added element of excitement to a stirring book. A. C. McClurg & Co.

The Ingersoll Lectures on Immortality, delivered year by year at Harvard, as they appear in book form, make a collection of great interest for the lay as well as the theological library. To a list already notable is now added the name of Prof. Josiah Royce. Premising that the immortality which he asserts is an immortality of the individual, Prof. Royce directs attention to the elusive character of that which we call individuality, defines an individual as a being that adequately expresses a purpose, points out that only the Absolute can be an entirely whole individual, and maintains that the real world, viewed as a whole, is a unique expression of His purpose, so that every fragment of life therein has its unique place in His life. Thence, he argues the conscious attainment, in a life that is not the present mortal life, of that individuality which now is meant and sought. "The Conception of Immortality," it is needless to add, will repay careful reading. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.